



CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN

FOR

FFY 2006-2007

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/05 – 9/30/07. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.57 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 05-31-2006)

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AMENDMENTS LOGChild Care and Development Services Plan for
For the period: 10/1/05 -- 9/30/07

SECTION AMENDED	EFFECTIVE/ PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE	DATE SUBMITTED TO ACF	DATE APPROVED BY ACF

Instructions:

- 1) Lead Agency completes the first 3 columns and sends a photocopy of this Log (showing the latest amendment sent to ACF) and the amended section(s) to the ACF Regional contact. A copy of the Log, showing the latest amendment pending in ACF, is retained in the Lead Agency's Plan.
- 2) ACF completes column 4 and returns a photocopy of the Log to the grantee.
- 3) The Lead Agency replaces this page in the Plan with the copy of the Log received from ACF showing the approval date.

Note: This process depends on repeated subsequent use of the same Log page over the life of the Plan. At any time the Log should reflect all amendments, both approved and pending in ACF. The Lead Agency is advised to retain those "old" plan pages that are superseded by amendments in a separate appendix to its Plan.

PART 1 ADMINISTRATION

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

1.1 Lead Agency Information (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency: **Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services**

Address of Lead Agency: **PO Box 4210**

Helena, MT 59604

Name and Title of the Lead Agency's Chief Executive Officer: **Dr. Robert Wynia**

Phone Number: **Office: (406) 444-3487,**

Fax Number: **Fax: (406) 444-1970**

E-Mail Address: **Rwynia@mt.gov**

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): **www.dphhs.mt.gov**

1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name of the State Child Care Contact (CCDF): **Linda Fillinger**

Title of State Child Care Contact: **Chief, Early Childhood Services Bureau**

Address: **PO Box 202952**

Phone Number: **(406) 444-1828**

Fax Number: **(406) 444-2547**

E-Mail Address: **lfillinger@mt.gov**

Phone Number for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any):

1-866-239-0458

Web Address for child care subsidy program information (for the public) (if any):

1.3 Estimated Funding

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006. (§98.13(a))

CCDF: \$13,231,444

Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF: \$7,287,356

Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care: \$0

State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: \$1,313,990

State Matching Funds: \$1,626,909

Total Funds Available: \$23,459,699

1.4 Estimated Administration Cost

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of Federal CCDF and State Matching Funds will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): \$ 1,107,285 (%). (658E(c)(3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

1.5 Administration of the Program

Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

☐

Yes. Skip questions 1.6 and 1.7. Go to Section 1.8.

☒

No, and the following describes how the Lead Agency maintains overall control when services or activities are provided through other agencies: (658D(b)(1)(A), §98.11)

The Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) of the Human and Community Services Division, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services manages the CCDF programs. The Child Care unit staff includes a supervisor, four Child Care Program Officers and one child care specialist. The child care unit is supported by the ECSB fiscal officer and a contracts specialist.

The program staff is responsible for oversight of the programs offered through Montana's Child Care & Development Fund. The state program staff develops and writes program policy and rules, provides training and technical assistance, develops and monitors the CCDF program operations and budget, prepares and submits reports to the Federal government and oversees the Montana child care system.

Contracts are awarded by the lead agency through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Contracts are awarded for a one-year period. Some of these contracts are renewable through an annual non-competitive application process for up to five years. The renewal process requires that the contractor submit a new work plan, budget, updated assurances, and documents of compliance:

Contract	Contractor
CCR&R Eligibility Determination, Provider Services and Community Services	Private Non-profit
CCR&R Network	Private Non-Profit
Child Care Provider Grants	Private Non-profit & For Profit
Early Childhood Education, CDA, AA and BA Coursework	Higher Education
Early Care and Education Professional Development	Higher Education

Contract	Contractor
Inclusion Coordination	Private Non-profit Higher Education
Infant Toddler Services	Private Non-profit & For Profit
Mentoring	Private Non-profit & Higher Education
Specialized Training	Private Non-profit, Higher Education & Independent Contractors

The lead agency is responsible for executing and monitoring all contracts for compliance. Monitoring is conducted through a process of on-sight visits that include review of computerized data files, agency files, and staff, parent and coordinating agency interviews.

The lead agency in consultation with the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council is responsible for planning and making recommendations regarding the policy and rules, system, quality, and training initiatives outlined in this plan. Together the lead agency and the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council develop, implement, maintain, and evaluate the effectiveness of the state's child care programs.

1.6 **Determining Eligibility**

For child care services funded under §98.50 (e.g., certificates, vouchers, grants/contracts for slots based on individual eligibility), does the Lead Agency itself: (§98.11)

- Determine individual eligibility of non-TANF families?
☐ Yes.
☒ No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of non-TANF families for child care:

The lead agency contracts with private non-profit agencies for child care resources and referral services in twelve districts. Families apply for child care services at the child care resource and referral agency, where an eligibility specialist processes the family's application and determines eligibility for child care services. Refer to Attachment 'A', for a listing of private non-profit agencies currently serving Montana's twelve child care resource and referral districts.

- Determine individual eligibility of TANF families?
☒ Yes.
☐ No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of TANF families for child care:
- Assist parents in locating child care?
☐ Yes.
☒ No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that assists parents:

The lead agency contracts with non-profit agencies for child care resource and referral services in twelve districts. Referral specialists maintain up-to-date listings of licensed and registered child care programs in their district. Families learn about facility type, location, vacancies, hours of operation and cost of care. Referral specialists also counsel families on selecting quality child care programs. Refer to Attachment 'A', for a listing of private non-profit agencies currently serving Montana's twelve child care resource and referral districts.

- Make payments to providers and/or parents?
☒ Yes.
☐ No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that makes payments:

Child care providers submit invoices to their district child care resource and referral agency. Staff verifies and authorizes the claim using the Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) automated data system, a subsystem of the Agency Wide Accounting & Clients System (AWACS), which then process to the State Accounting Budgeting and Human Resources System (SABHRS). CCUBS payments are batched on the fifth business day of each month and every Tuesday thereafter. Payments reach the providers 2-3 days following each batch run.

1.7 **Non-Governmental Entities**

Is any entity named in response to section 1.6 a non-governmental entity? (658D(b), §§98.10(a), 98.11(a))

- ☒ Yes, and the following entities named in 1.6 are non-governmental:

Refer to Attachment 'A', for a listing of twelve private non-profit Child Care Resource and Referral agencies currently serving Montana Districts.

- ☐ No.

1.8 **Use of Private Donated Funds**

Will the Lead Agency use private donated funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2) and (f)?

- ☒ Yes, The name and type of entity designated to receive private donated funds is:
Name: Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services
Address: c/o Early Childhood Services Bureau,
PO Box 202952, Helena MT 59620
Contact: Linda Fillinger, Bureau Chief
Type: State Agency

☐ No.

1.9 Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children

1.9.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

☐ Yes, and:

() The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).

(%) Estimated % of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

☒ No.

- 1.9.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

☐ Yes, and

(%) Estimated % of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

☒ No.

- 1.9.3 If the State answered yes to 1.9.1 or 1.9.2, the following describes State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))

1.10 Improper Payments

- 1.10.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?

An improper payment is a payment requested or made to a parent or provider in error.

- 1.10.2 Has your State developed strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce and/or collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)

☒ Yes, and these strategies are:

The Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB) contracts with 12 Child Care Resource & Referral agencies to administer the CCDF subsidy program to families who meet program qualifications. Families participate in regulated facilities, which are licensed or registered for public safety, and unregulated facilities with friend, neighbor or family care. The latter group provides a minimum of self attested safety requirements as well as passes a background check. Invoices for child care benefits are only issued for qualified families who document their status of need for services provided in approved facilities from the Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) payment and licensing processing system.

The ECSB reviews a minimum of 10% of the CCR&Rs cases per year, and in addition, requires each CCR&R agency to review a minimum of 10% of the cases and share these results with the ECSB. The review

process includes checking that the income for the family was determined correctly, child support is followed through, and the family has established a need for child care assistance by participating in activities, which require child care such as working and attending school. These reviews ensure that a minimum of 20% of the subsidy caseload is reviewed each year. During the review process, if an error has been identified, the CCR&R agency would complete the process to collect any payment made in excess of what was due to the parent or provider or would adjust the next invoice to add the additional amount due to the parent or provider. Any parent or provider that makes an over claim or has an identified overpayment, which was a result of an intentional program violation (IPV) would be assessed with an additional payment penalty amount. For the first IPV, an additional 10% penalty is added to the overpayment or taken away from the over claim. For the 2nd IPV, an additional 25% penalty is added to the overpayment or taken away from the over claim. For the 3rd IPV, the parent or provider would lose their ability to participate in the program.

IPV tracking is performed outside of the CCUBS system on a manual spreadsheet tracking, provider/parent data, R&R contact information, instance of violation, amount and penalty, and collection completion,

If a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship overpayment occurs because of a family, a provider or administrative error, the CCR&R Eligibility Specialist will contact the parent, or provider, to verify the error. Adjust the invoice in CCUBS; Notify the parent, or provider, that s/he must repay the amount of the overpayment; and Attempt to have the parent, or provider, sign a Repayment Agreement, DPHHS-HCS/CC-121. CCR&R Eligibility Specialists adjusts the invoice in CCUBS. Repayment may be accomplished in any of the following ways: The parent must make a monthly payment. A parent who is not making monthly payments on a child care overpayment is not eligible for further child care assistance. An active provider's payment may be reduced on CCUBS. A parent or provider may pay the total amount of the overpayment by check or money order. Payments must be made out to DPHHS Fiscal and delivered to the CCR&R: Credit the account on CCUBS; Identify the payment as 'child care' and add the SSN, so A/R applies the payment correctly; Include a copy of the A/R-110C (with the first payment only); and Forward the payment to DPHHS Accounts Receivable.

- ☐ No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No.

1.10.3 Has your State developed strategies to identify errors in the determination of client eligibility?

☒

Yes, and these strategies are:

Montana reviews a minimum of 20% of the actual subsidy caseload each year to determine that families were indeed eligible for child care assistance. In addition, Montana provides training to the Child Care Resource & Referral agency subsidy workers twice a year to instruct on processes, which involve determination of family eligibility.

☐

No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?

☐

Yes.

☐

No.

PART 2

DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

2.1 Consultation and Coordination

- 2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)). Indicate the entities with which the Lead Agency has consulted or coordinated (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in the following table.

Consultation involves the participation of an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).

Coordination involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development services, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, and (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (5) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	Consultation	Coordination
• Representatives of local government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
• State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for		
○ Public health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ Employment services / workforce development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ Public education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ TANF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *
○ State pre-kindergarten programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Head Start programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
○ Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Consultation	Coordination
• Other (See guidance):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

* Required.

For each box checked above, (a) identify the agency providing the service and (b) describe the consultation and coordination efforts, if any. Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

The Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council guides the majority of consultation and coordination activities in Montana. All of the groups listed above provide representation on the MECAC. The council is comprised of members representing from the following groups:

- * Parents (2)
- * Child Protective Services (1)
- * Child Care Providers (3)
- * Services for the Disabled (1)
- * Child Care Resource and Referral Network (2)
- * Business (1)
- * Child Care Licensing and Registration (2)
- * Early Childhood Career Development (1)
- * Early Childhood Higher Ed. (1)
- * Child and Adult Care Food Program (2)
- * Montana Child Care Association (1)
- * Montana Association for the Education of Young Children (1)
- * Head Start (2)
- * County Commission (1)
- * TANF/WoRC Employment and Training (3)
- * Tribal CCDF (1)
- * State Legislator (1)
- * Public Health (1)
- * Office of Public Instruction (1)

- * Low Income Constituency Group (1)
- * Organized Labor (1)
- * Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (1)

The mission of the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council is:

- The Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council provides leadership and advocacy assuring access to quality early childhood and school-age care and education for all children, their families, and their communities.

The MECAC meets three times per year and is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing the programs funded through the CCDF. The MECAC is comprised of three committees that are responsible for advising the lead agency in the areas of (1) Program Policy, (2) Quality, and (3) Public Policy.

- The Program Policy Committee (Child Care Centers, TANF/Employment and Training (WoRC), Child Care Resource and Referral, TANF/Office of Public Assistance, TANF Program Administration) is responsible for the development and oversight of policy surrounding the child care subsidy program.
- The Quality Committee (CACFP, MCCA, Child Care Plus+, Career Development, Child Care Licensing, Higher Ed., Healthy Child Care Montana,) provides oversight to the lead agency regarding all Best Beginning programs.
- The Public Policy Committee (CCR&R, Head Start/State Collaboration, Child Care Licensing, County Commission, Head Start, Business, AFL-CIO, Tribal CCDF, state legislator) is responsible for public information gathering and dissemination regarding the state plan and any legislative agenda items.

Representatives of local government - (a) The Montana Association of County Commissioners (MaCO). (b) MaCO selects a representative to serve on the MECAC. This person is a member of the Public Policy committee and is responsible for bringing local concerns to the council. This input in turn helps to shape the public agenda for early childhood at both the state and county levels.

Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations - (a) The Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, the Blackfeet Nation, the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, the Crow Tribe, the Northern Cheyenne Nation, the Fort Peck Tribes, and the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boys Reservation.

(b) A Tribal Child Care Administrator has traditionally filled the Tribal representation seat on the MECAC. Currently a representative from a Tribal College fills that seat. The MECAC hosts an annual meeting that brings all Tribal CCDF administrators and other Tribal representatives together to discuss early childhood coordination between tribes and the state. This forum allows all parties to discuss state/tribal coordination issues such as:

- Child care licensing/registration agreements;
- Tribal Child Care service areas;
- The implications of Tribally administered TANF programs on child care programs;
- Utilization of Early Learning Guidelines in tribal early childhood programs;
- Training integration and articulation agreements between Tribal colleges and the state university system;
- Background check processes;
- Complimentary subsidy programs and rate setting; and
- Other issues as deemed necessary for discussion.

Other Federal, State, local, Tribal and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services

Public Health - (a) The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Family and Community Health Bureau.

(b) The Montana Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant is administered under a partnership between the Family and Community Health Bureau and the Early Childhood Services Bureau. The MECAC serves in an advisory capacity to that effort. The ECCS grant is an outgrowth of the Healthy Child Care Montana project. Both the ECCS grant coordinator and the former HCCM coordinator are members of the MECAC representing early childhood public health.

The Montana Early Childhood Comprehensive System will be the synchronization and improved collaboration of all existing pertinent services at the state and local level for children aged 0-5 and their families, so that whatever service provider a child accesses, all other needed services are identified and the child and their family are guided to that service.

The ECCS Grant involves a planning process that will build on existing information and infrastructure in Montana and a strategic plan to support a coordinated system of services for young children and their families in these areas:

- Medical Homes
- Mental Health and Social Emotional Development
- Early Care and Education
- Parent Education
- Family Support

Employment services/ workforce development - (a) the Montana Department of Labor and Industry

(b) Collaboration between DPHHS, Early Childhood Services Bureau, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, the Early Childhood Career Development office at MSU-Bozeman and Western Montana College of the University of Montana resulted in the creation of a Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship. This effort was initially funded through a grant with SSDOL. The initial effort resulted in the enrollment and training of over 100 Child Care Development Specialist Apprentices. The Child Care Development Specialist certificate is recognized as Level 4 on the Montana Early Care and Education Career Lattice. It is also recognized as a level of training that is higher than a CDA by Head Start.

The CCDS program was able to continue after the grant ended through the continuation of a formal partnership with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry and the DPHHS, Early Childhood Services Bureau. The lead agency uses quality dollars to support training and professional development for individuals enrolled in the apprenticeship program. The DOLI supplies a degree of program oversight and expertise in the area of registered apprenticeship, the ECSB program specialist who is responsible for statewide early childhood training coordination efforts is also responsible for administering the CCDS program.

Public Education - (a) the Montana Office of Public Instruction

(b) The lead agency under the guidance of the MECAC, works with the Montana Office of Public Instruction in several areas:

- Out-of-School-Time care - OPI is responsible for Montana's 21st Century Learning Center grants. The lead agency contracts with the Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network to establish and support a network of Out-of-School-Time service providers. The MTCCR&R Network recently received a Mott Foundation grant to assist with this effort. This

grant funds a position that is housed within the Early Childhood Services Bureau. This situation allows for ease in communication between the primary players in school age care.

- Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development - the Office of Public Instruction administers special education services offered through Part B of IDEA. The Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD) advisory group became interested in early childhood professional preparation. An invitation to the early childhood specialists in Montana resulted in a multi-agency collaboration focusing on early childhood career preparation.
- Early Learning Guidelines are scheduled to be introduced to public school principals and administrator's in the Spring of 2005 and distributed for use by Kindergarten teachers in the Fall of 2005.

TANF -(a) Department of Public Health and Human Services, Human and Community Services Division, Public Assistance Bureau.

(b) The lead agency for TANF and the lead agency for the CCDF are both located in the Human and Community Services Division of the Department of Public Health and Human Services. Communication happens on a regular basis regarding policy for TANF child care. The State transfers a significant portion of the TANF Block grant to the CCDF to ensure child care is available for low-income working families. This strategy serves as a diversion for people contemplating applying for TANF benefits. If child care assistance is available, then it is more likely that parents will seek employment rather than TANF.

State pre-kindergarten programs - (a) Montana does not fund state pre-kindergarten programs. Pre-kindergarten services are provided through a network of private licensed and registered child care facilities; unlicensed private preschools, Head Start and special ed preschools funded through IDEA.

(b) The Montana Child Care Association and the Montana Association for the Education of Young children represent the interests of the "preschool community" on the MECAC. These collaborations strive to improve the overall quality of child care services offered in Montana. As a result many programs offer preschool curriculum using developmentally appropriate practice. Private child care businesses have been able to establish partnerships with Head Start and are looking for opportunities to partner with local school districts.

The MECAC provides a forum to discuss issues such as:

- The impact of No Child Left Behind and full day Kindergarten on their business.
- Professional preparation; and

- Business positioning to enable participation in potential Pre-K pilots.

Head Start Programs - Head Start and the Head Start/State Collaboration project are both represented on the MECAC. The Head Start /State Collaboration office is administered through a contract with Child Care Partnerships. The Head Start Collaboration Project Director is housed in the Early Childhood Services Bureau office. This arrangement allows for maximum communication between the State CCDF efforts and Head Start. A joint project that is currently underway involves the development of a “crosswalk” document between the Montana Early Learning Guidelines and the Head Start performance standards. This effort involves a collaboration between the Head Start collaboration office, the Early Childhood Services Bureau and the ECCS grant effort.

Programs that promote inclusion for children with Special Needs - A Collaborative application with Child Care Plus+, the Center on Inclusion in Early Childhood, of the University of Montana resulted in Montana being able to participate in the Map to Inclusion Project. This project resulted in the development of a contract to hire a state "Inclusion Coordinator," and revisions to the state "Special Needs Rate." The special needs rate is now based on costs related to care requirements. The Map to Inclusion project resulted a stronger link between Part C agencies and CCDF funded programs. The state Child Care Program Supervisor sits on the Family Support Services Council for Part C, as does Head Start.

- 2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. *Good Start, Grow Smart* encourages States to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood programs. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area.

- ☐ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft is included as Attachment _____
- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment _____
- ☐ **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment _____
- ☒ **Other (describe):**

This CCDF state plan serves as the foundation for coordination and collaboration across and between the state's early childhood programs. The Montana Early

Childhood Advisory Council is responsible for assuring that Montana's Early Childhood programs work together. They advise on all aspects of the CCDF (subsidy, quality and licensing), the Head Start State Collaboration Project, and the State Early Childhood Comprehensive Services grant. In addition to these projects, members represent the majority of the major early childhood service providers and programs that operate in the state.

The MECAC serves in an advisory capacity to the ECCS effort. This assures that the plan for coordination early childhood programs actually results in a comprehensive system of service delivery in five areas: medical homes, mental health and social emotional development, early care and education, parent education, and family support.

Writing a separate state plan for early childhood coordination under *Good Start Grow Smart* would be duplicative in light of this effort.

Describe the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

Indicate whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

The Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council is responsible for ensuring coordination exists. The following partnerships are in place so that the system of early childhood services that is evolving in Montana can continue to improve

1. CCDF – The CCDF serves as a foundation for the early childhood system in the state. The mission of the ECSB's Child Care Unit is to improve the affordability, accessibility and quality of child care by improving access to quality child care by offering incentives that will increase the number of providers, who are engaged in early childhood training and improving the affordability of child care for working low-income families. Partnerships are necessary to achieve this mission because of the limited nature of funding available.
2. TANF – The Department transfers funds from the TANF Block Grant to the CCDF.
3. CACFP – The Early Childhood Services Bureau is home to the State's Child and Adult Care Food Program.
4. Head Start State Collaboration project – The Early Childhood Services Bureau houses the Head Start State collaboration project.

5. 21st Century Learning and other programs for school age children– The CCDF funds the Child Care Resource and Referral Network to provide collaboration services in the area of school-age care. The CCR&R network employs a school-age program coordinator that is funded by a Mott Foundation grant. That individual is housed in the Early Childhood Services Bureau office.
6. Maternal and Child Health – The state ECCS grant is a joint effort between the DPHHS Maternal and Child Health Bureau and the Early Childhood Services Bureau.
7. Higher Education – Western Montana College of the University of Montana offers college level early childhood education. The 24-credit early childhood curriculum is the foundation for the CDA or CCDS certificate programs, and Associate's Degree in Early Childhood or a Bachelor's degree in early childhood. These efforts are supported by CCDF program and scholarship dollars. Students are able to participate statewide through distance learning opportunities and articulation agreements within the University and Tribal college systems. Students are supported in their education efforts through CCDF Merit Pay, Pell Grants and other financial aide.
8. Child Protective Services – children in need of child care because they are in danger of abuse or neglect receive funding through the CCDF and through state CPS dollars. A hierarchy of funding exists in order to maximize the dollars available to support children in need.

Describe the **results** or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

Montana sets **benchmarks and expected outcomes for the CCDF** that are updated annually. These are the most recent benchmarks and results:

- A. Improve access to quality child care by offering incentives that will increase the number of providers, who are engaged in early childhood training.
 1. By the end of SFY 2004, increase by 10%, the number of providers accredited by nationally recognized early childhood organizations. (There were 50 nationally accredited providers at the end of SFY 2003.)
 - Update: There were 50 nationally accredited providers at the end of SFY 2003 and 60 as of SFY 2004, a 20% increase.

2. Increase by 10% the number of providers at a level 3 or higher participating on the Career Development System Practitioner Registry. (There were 345 providers at level 3 or higher at the end of SFY 03.)
 - Update: There were 345 providers at level 3 or higher at the end of SFY 2003 and 369 at the end of SFY 2004, a 7% increase.
3. By the end of SFY 2004 increase by 10% the number of caregivers completing the Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship program annually. (In SFY 2003 - 63 caregivers completed.)
 - Update: In SFY 2003, 63 caregivers had completed the program and 101 Providers had completed the program at the end of SFY 2004, a 60% increase.
4. By SFY 2004, increase the number of Star providers by 10%. (There were 23 one star providers; and 27- two star providers at the end of state fiscal year 2003).
 - Update: There were 50 star-rated providers at the end of SFY 2003 and there were 60 at the end of SFY 2004, a 20% increase.

B. Improve the affordability of child care for working low-income families:

1. By the end of SFY 2004 increase the number of working families receiving sliding fee child care services support by 7%. (5682 families were served in SFY 2001; 7603 in SFY 02; 6169 in SFY 03.)
 - Update: At the end of 2003, 6169 families were served in the child care sliding fee program and by the end of SFY 2004, 5689 families were served, close to an 8% decrease. The decrease was a result of the waiting list, implemented in September 2002 and finally rescinded in December 2003.

The TANF transfer enables the state to continue to meet and exceed the benchmarks set for the CCDF.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program's benchmarks and outcomes: Achieve the mission of the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which is 'to influence healthy lifestyle choices by facilitating program participation and compliance, funding nutritious meals and providing effective training' by the following:

- A. By the end of FFY 2004, we will determine the number of centers who meet the CACFP's recommended dietary guidelines. This will be accomplished by:
 1. Completing a dietary analysis based on submitted center menus,

2. Conducting a nutrient analysis of meals served to a sample of childcare centers. Training will be adjusted according to needs indicated by the nutrient analysis.
 - Update: 90% of participating centers met the CACFP recommended dietary guidelines after training and technical assistance by the nutrition specialist.
- B. By the end of FFY 2004, improve the nutrition information available to and program integrity of 13 sponsoring organizations by:
1. Presenting one nutrition-based training,
 - Update: One nutrition based training was held for Day Care Home Sponsors held May 11 – 14, 2004.
 2. Monitoring $\frac{1}{2}$ of the 13 DCH Sponsor trainings of Providers,
 - Update: This benchmark was reduced in February 2004 from monitoring all trainings offered to monitoring $\frac{1}{2}$ of all DCH Sponsors. Five of the 13 sponsor trainings were monitored.
 3. Providing technical assistance on an as-needed basis.
 - Update: Two technical assistance visits to Sponsors of Day Care Homes were held.
 4. Presenting training on the topic of program integrity once for 13 sponsoring organizations with 25-30 participants.
 - Update: One program integrity training was performed during the Day Care Home Sponsor Training held May 11 – 14, 2004 with 27 attendees.

Additional results include:

1. The coordination of program policy – example programs who have been disqualified for cause from the CACFP are not eligible for Best Beginnings Quality programs.
2. The integration of CACFP nutrition training into the Knowledge Base and Early Learning Guidelines.
3. The integration of CACFP training into the State's training approval system for licensing and participation in the practitioner registry.

The mission of the **Montana Head Start State Collaboration project** is to impact the lives of low-income children and families by influencing state and local policy and the effective delivery of services, while linking Head Start Programs and communities through collaborative relationships.

1. Increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start teachers who complete the early childhood apprenticeship program. At the end of FFY 2003, 53 Head Start and Early Head Start teachers completed the early childhood apprenticeship program.

- Update: At the end of FFY 2004, 65 Head Start and Early Head Start teachers completed the early childhood apprenticeship program, a more than 22% increase.

Additional results include:

1. The creation of a “crosswalk” document that links the Montana Early Learning Guidelines to the Head Start Performance Standards.
2. Standardization of subsidy program policy for Head Start facilities and private child care facilities.
3. Head Start trainings approved through the training approval system and made available to child care providers.

Collaborations directed by the MECAC with regard to **programs for school age children** have resulted in:

1. TANF direct funding for the Montana Out of School Time grants that are administered by the Early Childhood Services Bureau.
2. The creation of administrative rules for school age programs. These rules are anticipated to be formally proposed and available for public comment in the summer of 2005.
3. A successful Mott Foundation Grant that funds a position housed in the ECSB specifically for the purpose of coordinating school age programs.

The plan for **Montana’s Early Childhood Comprehensive System** is in the development phase. The vision, mission and guiding principles are:

Vision - Montana’s future relies upon healthy children, families and communities.

Mission - The mission of Montana’s Early Childhood Comprehensive System Initiative is to develop a system that includes an array of quality services creating opportunities for young children to achieve full potential within their families and communities.

Guiding Principles -

1. All families can benefit from education and support
2. All parents are in the process of developing their skills and abilities as parents.
3. A diverse approach to service delivery must be innovative, empowering and inclusive.
4. Every child deserves to have quality early childhood experiences.
5. Accessible and appropriate health care is a crucial component of an ECC System.
6. An ECCS must have poverty reduction, economic development and job skills training as core components.
7. The private sector must be included as and encouraged to become a key partner in ECCS development.

The draft expected results of the ECCS grant are:

- Result 1. All children in Montana have a primary health care provider (medical home)
- Result 2. All children are enrolled in public or private health insurance programs.
- Result 3. Other community services and resources are linked to the primary care providers (medical homes)
- Result 4. A continuum of services that supports positive mental health and social emotional development is available to all children.
- Result 5. All early childhood caregivers and teachers receive education and information on mental health and social emotional development issues and services for young children
- Result 6. All children receive services in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Result 7. Families receive appropriate mental health services when they need them.
- Result 8. All young children have access to high quality early care and education to support early learning.
- Result 9. All early child care and education programs and settings are linked to the overall system and community resources.
- Result 10. Parents and families understand the importance of providing a nurturing environment for the development of a healthy child.
- Result 11. Families will be supported in raising their children.
- Result 12. All families receive education and information on all issues and services for young children in a culturally appropriate manner.

Collaborations with **Higher Ed.** result in:

1. The availability of college level training for early childhood practitioners working in a wide variety of settings.
2. The ability to embed the Knowledge Base and Early Learning Guidelines in college level coursework
3. The availability of college level early childhood training in virtually any location in the state.

Collaboration with **Child Protective Services** results in:

1. The ability to maximize limited fiscal resources to support children who are in danger of abuse or neglect and in need of child care.
2. The ability to efficiently manage child care dollars through the CCUBS computer system

Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

Montana's early childhood system is built on a philosophy of coordination and partnership. Because of the rural nature of this state and the limited amount of funding available for early childhood purposes, partnerships are crucial to attaining the results listed above. Areas targeted for improvement over the next

two-year plan cycle include the evaluation of programs and partnership efforts and the creation of stronger partnerships in the area of the public school system.

2.2 Public Hearing Process

Describe the Statewide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description must provide:

Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing:

On May 1, 2005, the notice of a child care state plan public hearing was printed in 12 major newspapers in the state. Additionally, all child care providers and parents receiving child care subsidies were directly mailed an announcement of the hearing. A reminder card was sent to all state paid child care providers and parents the week before the hearing

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing:

Announcements of the child care state plan hearing were printed in the 12 major newspapers across the state.

Date(s) of public hearing(s):

The date of the public hearing was set for May 24, 2005 from 6:00 – 9:00 PM using the METNET interactive television system.

Hearing site(s):

Hearing sites included: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Dillon, Glasgow, Glendive, Great Falls, Harlowton, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Miles City, Missoula, Sidney.

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s):

The draft state plan was posted on the Internet, or made available upon request of either the state office or the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

A brief summary of the public comments from this process is included as Attachment ____.

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

Describe (1) the activities, including planned activities, to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs, and (2) the results or expected results of these activities. (658D(b)(1), §98.16(d))

1. The Child Care Resource and Referral member agencies have developed enhanced resource and referral services that are available to local businesses. They are also instrumental in creating local public-private partnerships that encourage private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs. The CCR&R Network and twelve member agencies offer the following services to businesses across the state.
 - Employee child care needs assessment,
 - Business work-family self-assessment,
 - Community care resources assessment,
 - Employee child care cost-benefit analysis,
 - Review of employer child care options,
 - Information on employer tax benefits,
 - Child care referral services for employees seeking child care,
 - Child care payment assistance for low-income employees.
2. The lead agency contracts with twelve private non-profit child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies who perform a variety of tasks, which include the following:
 - Determine eligibility for state assisted child care services;
 - Link low income families to child care providers;
 - Process state paid child care provider payments;
 - Recruit new child care providers;
 - Provide training and technical assistance to child care providers;
 - Many sponsor the USDA/FNS Child and Adult Care Food Program for child care providers;
 - Consult with business to establish employer supported child care services;
 - Refer parent and providers to other agencies and programs;
 - Provide information about state assisted child care programs;
 - Offer parenting information and public education on child care issues;
 - Assist in the development and promotion of policy initiatives, which expand and maintain the supply of quality child care in the local communities as well as on the state and national level.
3. The Department also contracts with WoRC (Work Readiness Component) operators to help TANF families become self-sufficient through intensive case management, which includes training and employment related activities. The WoRC operators help families make informed decisions regarding child care provider choices and refer families to their local resource and referral agency when looking for quality child care.

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4. The lead agency uses the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council to help guide decision making about services to families, administration of the fund, quality initiatives, and training. A wide spectrum of individuals (including foundations and business) is represented on the council (see 2.1 above).
 5. The Department of Public Health and Human Services, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, the Early Childhood Career Development Offices and MSU-Bozeman and Western Montana College of the University of Montana joined to create the Child Care Development Specialist apprenticeship. This program works with private businesses to train employees and create high quality services.
 6. The lead agency participates in a Public/Private partnership with child care programs participating in the child care apprentice program. Currently, 30 for-profit child care programs participate.

PART 3

CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

3.1 Description of Child Care Services

3.1.1 Certificate Payment System

Describe the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

(1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));

Montana's certificate form (invoice) is included as Attachment 'C'. A Child Care Resource & Referral Eligibility Specialist determines the family's eligibility for the child care program through the Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) computer system. The family is notified of eligibility determination by mail. If a family does not have a provider, the family may select a provider at that time.

Once the parent selects a child care provider, the CCR&R worker enters the provider information into the CCUBS system. If the child care provider is licensed, registered, or legally unregistered, provider information is available to the CCR&R worker through an interface with the Child and Adult Protective Services (CAPS) computer system. Once the provider information is associated with the family, a child care certification plan is mailed to the parent and to the provider. The certification plan includes the child care provider's name, address, license information, the child(ren)'s name, age, authorized child care hours, and the date span for the certification.

Once the child care certification plan is issued to the parent, a provider billing certificate, or invoice, is mailed to the provider. The invoice is pre-printed with family, child, and provider information. The invoice is mailed to the provider by the 20th of the service month. The provider fills in the hours of care for the month and signs the invoice. The invoice is returned to the CCR&R for CCUBS processing. Payments are held for batch processing on the 5th business day of the month, and then processed each subsequent Tuesday. The provider or parent can expect to receive payment about two days following invoice processing. Also, providers may elect to make direct deposit arrangements and receive payment through electronic fund transfer.

(2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2)) and

A parent may choose any licensed child care center, any registered family or group child care home, or a legally unregistered child care provider to provide care for their children. If their current provider is none of the above, the provider may apply to become a legally unregistered provider.

Before a legally unregistered provider can receive payment for services, the prospective provider must apply at the district CCR&R agency and pass a child protective services and criminal records background check. If approved, payment is retroactive to the date the application is received in the local CCR&R agency. The provider certifies the facility meets health and safety requirements. Additionally, the provider must be 18 years old and must agree to attend an orientation within the first sixty days of being approved by the CCR&R.

Not every care arrangement qualifies for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. A child is NOT eligible for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship if the child is related to the child's care provider in any of the following ways:

- The child's care provider is the child's parent;
- The child's care facility is owned, entirely or in part, by the parent;
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's TANF Cash assistance household;
- The child's care provider is a member of the child's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship eligibility household; and
- If the child's care provider lives with the child, but not as a member of the child's eligibility household, the individual must qualify as a provider and be one of the following relatives:
 - Aunt or Uncle
 - Grandparent
 - Great Grand Parent.

No other household members qualify as care givers for the purpose of receiving a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

- (3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the mix of \$98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts, and explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate.
(98.30(a) & (b)) This may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services.

- 3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

☐ Yes, and the following describes the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

☒ No

3.1.3 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

☒ Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are: (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv))

A legally unregistered provider (LUP) must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be 18 years of age, or older;
- Not be a parent or person acting in loco parentis;
- Not be included in the parent's cash assistance payment household;
- Not be included in the child care assistance household;
- If living with the child, in addition to conditions above, the LUP must be a grand parent, great-grand-parent, aunt, or uncle;
- Be mentally and physically capable of providing child care that meets safety, health, and other basic child care requirements;
- Not have a substantiated report involving harm, physical or sexual abuse to children or adults;
- Agree to attend an orientation session within the sixty days of being approved for providing child care;
- Provide care to the children of one family or, if the children are from different families, may care for two or fewer children; and
- Pass criminal and child protective background checks.

☐ No

3.1.4 Are all of the child care services described in 3.1.1 above (including certificates) offered throughout the State? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

☒ Yes

☐ No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

These rates are provided as Attachment E.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of **July 1, 2004**

The following is a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: **June 2004** . (§98.43(b)(2))
- A copy of the Market Rate Survey instrument and a summary of the results of the survey are provided as Attachment **F**.

Rates for Centers, Group and Family Homes are currently set at the 75th percentile of the 2004 Market Rate Survey. Because there is no “market” for Legally Unregistered Provider (LUP) care, LUP rates are set at 75 percent of corresponding Family Home rates.

Montana allows payment for more than a full day of child care in a 24-hour period. A child care ‘day’ is defined as 6 to 10 hours. To accommodate families who must be away from their children longer than 10 hours a day, we pay an hourly rate for care in excess of 10 hours in one day. For care of 16 or more hours/day, we will pay another full day of child care in a 24-hour period.

The Montana Statewide Rate is used when paying out-of-state child care facilities that serve Montana’s children who are in out-of-state foster care placements.

Montana requires child care providers to notify the State of their rates prior as a prerequisite to issuing payment for child care services. The Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) computer system looks for the provider rate before an invoice is processed. This procedure ensures that Montana is paying the provider’s rate, if the District rate is higher than the provider’s rate. It also ensures that Montana is informed of provider rates statewide.

Before the market rate survey analysis, Montana sends a letter to each child care provider, requesting that current rates be updated on CCUBS, through their local child care and referral agency. The letter points out the need for current rates, even if the provider does not currently serve subsidized children. A copy of the letter is found in Attachment ‘**G**.’

Montana conducted a market rate survey on June 30, 2004. Montana uses district rates to facilitate access to care in areas where families and providers experience a higher cost of living. Provider rate data is extracted from the Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) computer system and sorted by three categories for statistical analysis: 1) geographic location, 2) child care setting, and 3) type of child care. The next market rate survey will be conducted in 2006.

Child Care Resource & Referral District – see attachment ‘A’	Child Care Setting	Type of Child Care
Billings Bozeman Butte Glasgow Glendive Great Falls Havre Helena Kalispell Lewistown Miles City Missoula Montana Out-of-State Rate <i>(Used for out-of-state child care facilities serving Montana foster care children)</i>	Child Care Center Group Child Care Home Family Child Care Home Legally Unregistered Provider <i>(Includes in-home care)</i>	Age 2+, Daily Age 2+, Hourly Infant, Daily Infant, Hourly

- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))

In June of 2004, Montana chose to bring payment rates up to the 75th Percentile. As of July 1, 2004, rates are set at the 75th percentile of the June 30, 2004 Market Rate Survey. A family relying on a child care scholarship can afford services among seventy-five percent of the child

- Additional facts that the Lead Agency relies on to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access include: (§98.43(d))
- If the payment rates do not reflect individual rates for the full range of providers - center-based, group home, family and in-home care -- explain how the choice of the full range of providers is made available to parents.
- At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set? If it varies across categories of care, please describe.

As of July 1, 2004, rates are set at the 75th percentile of the June 30, 2004 Market Rate Survey.

- Does the State have a tiered reimbursement system (higher rates for child care centers and family child care homes that achieve one or more levels of quality beyond basic licensing requirements)?

☒ Yes. If yes, describe:

Montana has chosen a three-level program that accommodates an intermediate step in quality improvement. Level one consists of facilities that are in compliance with state of Montana Licensing Regulations; level two (one-star) consists of facilities that meet the requirements for a two or three year extended license, that comply with quality indicators in the area of staff training, staff turnover, parent involvement and child development; and level three (two-star) consists of facilities that meet the requirements for a two or three year extended license and are accredited by NAEYC, NAFCC or NSACA.

To participate in the Star Quality Program all primary child care providers must comply with licensing and registration requirements. A primary caregiver must be at least 18 years of age and shall meet all of the following qualifications:

- a) verify that they have received a minimum of at least eight hours of continuing education annually provided by the department or other professional child care education and development programs of national, state or local child care organizations, or college course work in early childhood areas, or child development. Continuing education must relate to the Montana early care and education knowledge base;
- b) two years experience as a licensed or registered group or family day care home provider or day care center staff person or hold a bachelor of arts or an associate degree in education or a related field;
- c) hold a current course completion card in infant, child and adult CPR and infant choking response; and
- d) be currently certified in standard first aid.

For Star Quality purposes, a primary child care provider must in addition do the following in order to ensure quality:

- a) Every individual child has a primary caregiver assigned to them for a significant portion of the time the child is in attendance;
- b) Assess and provide care and education services for each child based on the child's strengths, interests and needs;
- c) Assess and incorporate elements of each family's culture, goals and aspirations for the child into each child's individual care and education program; and
- d) Work, on a regular basis, with the families and other child care program staff in planning for the child.

One-Star provider rates are increased 10% above the base rate. Two-Star provider rates are increased 15% above the base rate.

☐ No

3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

3.3.1 Complete column (a) and (b) in the matrix below. Complete Column (c) ONLY IF the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI).

3.3.2

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			(c) Income Level, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
			(d) \$/month	(e) % of SMI [Divide (d) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	\$ 2244	\$ 1,908	\$ 1,164	52%
2	\$ 2935	\$ 2,495	\$ 1,561	53%
3	\$ 3625	\$ 3,082	\$ 1,959	54%
4	\$ 4316	\$ 3,669	\$ 2,356	55%
5	\$ 5006	\$ 4,255	\$ 2,754	55%

If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, indicate the year used:

- (a) State [of Montana] Median Income Estimate for Four Person Families (SFY 2005); U. S Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, State Median Income for a Four Person Family. . Federal Register, Vol. 69, No 52, Wednesday, March 17, 2004.
- (b) Montana sliding fee scale upper limits, at 150% of the federal poverty level; Montana Child Care Manual May 1, 2005 (Attachment H).

If applicable, the date on which the eligibility limits detailed in column (b) became or will become effective:

3.3.2 How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income, for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments? Is the income of all family members included, or is the income of certain family members living in the household excluded? Please describe and/or include information as *Attachment* _____. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

Montana bases CCDF eligibility on gross family income, including all family members, yet excluding some types of income. Personal expenses are not deducted from gross income. Income exclusion may be based, in part, on the status of an individual in the household. For example, the earned income of a dependent child is excluded if the child is attending school. An income evaluation table is included as attachment **I**.

Additionally, Montana Administrative Rules require families with absent parents to verify court ordered child support income, or register with Child Support Enforcement, in an attempt to reduce the family's child care needs.

- 3.3.3 Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions or priority rules, for example, income limits that vary in different parts of the State, special eligibility for families receiving TANF, or eligibility that differs for families that include a child with special needs? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

☐ Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

☒ No

- 3.3.4 Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))

☒ Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)

☐ No

☐ Not applicable. CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.

- 3.3.5 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☒ Yes, and the upper age is **18**.

☐ No

- 3.3.6 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☒ Yes, and the upper age is **18**.

☐ No

3.3.7 Does the State choose to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

☒ Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)

☐ No

3.3.8 Does the State choose to provide child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

☒ Yes

☐ No

3.4 **Priorities for Serving Children and Families**

3.4.1 Describe how the State prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs, (b) children in families with very low incomes, and (c) other. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

(a) Child with Special Needs means a child who is age 18 or younger who requires additional assistance because of an emotional or physical disability and/or cognitive delay that is verified by medical records or other appropriate documentation such as written verification of the physical, emotional, or mental disability from the appropriate authority. Families of children with special needs are not placed on a waiting list, thereby guaranteeing a priority status for a child care scholarship. Child care providers are required to make a reasonable accommodation for children with special needs. If care requirements increase the cost of the care, one-time or ongoing costs may be paid from the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship.

(b) Children in families with very low income: A family, whose income is at or below the TANF eligibility threshold of the 2004 federal poverty guidelines, pays a \$10.00 monthly co-payment. Higher co-payments are a product of the family's Non-TANF gross monthly income (GMI) multiplied by the respective co-payment factor: $\text{Monthly Co-payment} = \text{GMI} \times \text{Percentage assigned to the Income Range}$.

3.4.2 Describe how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

Families receiving TANF Cash are eligible for child care subsidy, if the family makes arrangements at the child care resource and referral agency. Families in transition from or at-risk of becoming dependent on welfare services are served through a sliding fee scale, which prioritizes low-income working families according to family size and income, based on federal poverty guidelines.

3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency maintain a waiting list?

- ☐ Yes. If yes, for what populations? Is the waiting list maintained at the State level? Are certain populations given priority for services, and if so, which populations? What methods are employed to keep the list current?
- ☒ No. If no, does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?
- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Are there other ways that the Lead Agency addresses situations in which funding is not sufficient to serve all families that are technically eligible under State policies? If so, describe.

When the demand for child care subsidy exceeds the CCDF budget, Montana implements a waiting list to limit entry to the child care program. Families are prioritized according to family size and income based on 2004 federal poverty guidelines.

3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

- 3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works is provided as Attachment ____.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of _____.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

☐ Yes, and the following describes any additional factors that will be used:

☒ No

- 3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

☒ Yes

☐ No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) are provided as Attachment ____.

- 3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is:
\$_____.

The Lead Agency must elect ONE of these options:

- ☐ ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.
- ☐ ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.
- ☒ SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The following describes these families:

A family receiving child protective services may not be required to pay a fee. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.

- 3.5.4 Does the Lead Agency have a policy that prohibits a child care provider from charging families any unsubsidized portion of the provider's normal fees (in addition to the contributions discussed in 3.5.1)? (§98.43(b)(3))

☐ Yes. Please describe:

☒ No.

- 3.5.5 The following is an explanation of how the copayments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) are affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale is provided as Attachment 'H'.

Families who receive cash assistance, under TANF programs, pay a ten-dollar co-payment to receive for child care services to cover the required Family Investment Activities (FIA). A ten-dollar co-payment also applies to non-TANF families whose incomes are below TANF eligibility threshold of the 2004 federal poverty guidelines. Families at, or above, TANF eligibility of the 2004 federal poverty guidelines (FPG) pay an increasing percentage of their gross monthly income (GMI) as they approach 150% of the 2004 FPG. For every five percent increase of GMI, co-payment rates increase one percent. Serving families over 150% of the 2004 FPG is problematic, because wages are low (Avg. \$1,868.97 per month for private production workers, July 2004), the demand for child care is high, and child care subsidy funds are limited.

The 1997 Montana Legislature directed DPHHS to “. . . redesign the child care sliding fee scale for poor working families. The amount of the co-payment required by the sliding fee scale should not contain huge cliffs for families, either within the income categories for the scale or when families’ income increases so that they lose eligibility.” Currently, families pay 14% of their gross monthly income (GMI) at the upper limit of the sliding fee scale. This approaches the average cost of subsidy (\$418.59/mo) for one family. At 150% of the 2004 FPG, without assistance, a single parent family with one child will pay 26% of their GMI, and a two-parent family with one child will pay 21% of their GMI. This minimizes the cliff that family’s experience when leaving the upper limits of eligibility.

PART 4

PROCESSES WITH PARENTS

4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice

4.1.1 The following describes the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). If the process varies for families based on eligibility category, for instance, TANF versus non-TANF, please describe. The description should include:

- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options
- Where/how applications are made
- Who makes the eligibility determination
- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4
- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies are responsible for assisting families to choose and locate childcare that meets their needs. No fee may be charged for a basic referral to low-income families who qualify for assistance or families participating in the state's TANF cash assistance program. A basic referral listing will include the following:

- Program/provider name;
- Location (actual address is optional);
- Telephone number;
- Age range of children;
- Facility type;
- Days/hours of business; and
- The CCR&R Network Disclaimer.

Consumer education materials shall be included in a basic referral. These materials include:

- Information on choosing quality child care;
- CCR&R agency services;
- Child development information tailored to the family; and
- State-paid child care assistance information.

- Where/how applications are made

Applications for child care assistance are available at all of the CCR&R and TANF/WoRC program offices. Applicants must complete the application, provide necessary eligibility documentation; and submit the application to the CCR&R for processing.

- Who makes the eligibility determination

Families participating in Montana's TANF Cash program are eligible for child care services while participating in required activities. County Offices of Public Assistance (OPA) Case Managers determine financial eligibility for TANF cash assistance. After disregards, TANF Cash family income is at, or below, approximately 30% of the federal poverty guidelines. Families who need child care in support of TANF Family Investment Agreement/Employability Plan activities are referred to the district Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency by the Work Readiness Component (WoRC) Operator contractors.

The CCR&R staff refers families to licensed or registered child care providers with openings. If a family has specific requirements for a provider, for example, they wish their provider to be located in a specific location, the CCR&R, using a computer based referral system, can prepare a list of providers who might meet the family's needs.

Should a family choose an individual to serve as a legally unregistered provider (LUP), the CCR&R can explain and expedite the application process to the family and LUP applicant.

Once families lose eligibility for TANF cash assistance, because of increased income from employment, they are referred to the district CCR&R Agency. The CCR&R determines eligibility for non-TANF child care services and helps families locate child care providers.

If a family was never eligible for TANF benefits and is currently at risk of becoming a TANF Cash recipient, they may learn about available child care services through the following sources:

- Child care providers with grants and contracts;
- Child protective services social workers;
- WoRC Operators;
- Child care brochures available in CCR&R offices, county human services offices, and WoRC Program contractors;
- Word of Mouth;
- Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsors and CACFP Centers;
- DPHHS Child Care Licensors;
- DPHHS Web Page;
- DPHHS Virtual Human Services Pavilion; and

- Consumer education campaigns.

Child care resource and referral agencies prospect a family's eligibility (150% FPG) and issue a child care certification plan for up to six months. Certification plans may be shorter if prospective eligibility determination predicts a change in the family's circumstances that affects their basic eligibility. Families are eligible for non-TANF child care services for the entire 6-month period, until one of the following occurs:

- A family enters the TANF program.
- Household composition changes, eliminating the need for child care.
- Earnings exceed the limits of the sliding fee scale, when the family re-certifies.
- Work hours decrease and cause a family to fall below the minimum work requirement (120 hours/month for two parent family, 60 hours/month for single parent family or 40hours/month for a single parent attending school full time).
- A teen student/parent leaves high school.
- Unemployment continues past the grace period.

Department social workers determine the need for child protective services child care and use the CCR&R services to help families locate child care providers.

- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4

Families participating in the TANF program are not sanctioned due to lack of child care, as noted in section 4.4 of this plan. When child care is not available, TANF eligibility managers and parents negotiate activities that do not require child care to maintain their family investment agreement. Child care is identified as a good-cause exception for families unable to complete TANF activities. If a parent is involved in the TANF sanction process, the parent is informed in writing of the right to claim good-cause.

- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

Montana policies are designed to maintain the parent's eligibility, meet the need for additional child care, and continuity of care for children. The following policies reduce barriers and maintain eligibility for families:

- Presumptive Eligibility – If funding is available and a family's initial application indicates the family is eligible; the family may receive child care

for up to 30 days, while eligibility is verified. This ensures payment to the provider while the family's eligibility is being confirmed.

- Certified Enrollment – A child with a full-time certification plans have 150 hours to use when the provider requires payment during the child's absence.
- Extending Child Care Hours – Child Care Resource and Referral agencies have the ability to issue additional benefits to cover the parent's unanticipated work or school hours, when the need is verified.
- Fill-the-Gap - Child Care Resource and Referral agencies have the ability to issue child care benefits while a family is in transition from one assistance program to another.
- Grace Period – A family who loses employment may continue to receive benefits for 30 days, if they agree to use the time to gain employment. This grace period allows families to maintain eligibility while providing children with continuity of care.
- Hold-the Slot – A family may pre-arrange to temporarily maintain a child's enrollment for an absence of not more than 30 days.
- Holidays – Some child care providers charge families for holidays, when children are not in attendance. Montana helps parents meet this obligation by allowing providers to claim holidays when billing for services.
- Medical Appointments – A parent who meets activity/work requirements may use child care benefits to attend medical appointments.
- Medical Emergency - When work is interrupted by a medical emergency involving the parent or a child, the parent may be able maintain needed child care during the emergency.
- Suspending a Case – A family who temporarily loses eligibility may remain in the program for 30 days.

- 4.1.2 The following is a detailed description of how the State ensures that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies are responsible for assisting families to choose and locate childcare that meets their needs. The CCR&R Agency must maintain, and update monthly, the NACCRRWARE database to include local childcare facilities, Head Start centers and pre-schools. NACCRRWARE is capable of handling local childcare information and producing reports on the local number of families seeking care, the number of openings, the type of care needed, provider turnover rate and other relevant data. The CCR&R Agency will conduct initial meetings with parents in order to determine families' needs and to provide information that will help parents evaluate quality of care. The following information will be provided upon request when conducting a referral:

- Types of childcare programs
- Local market rate information
- Location of child care program

- Hours of available care
- Licensing and registration requirements
- Information about transportation to childcare facilities
- Consumer education about selecting childcare
- Information about child development
- A checklist that identifies quality child care services.

Referral services and parent education will be provided as requested by DPHHS for parents who are served by the CPS child care program. Families with special needs children will be given the same array of referral services as families with typically developing children in accordance with ADA. Special care arrangements or accommodations will be worked out between the parent and provider (and family service specialist in accordance with the child's IFSP or IEP if one is available). Referral services will be available in all of the counties and rural communities of each CCR&R district, as established by the state of Montana.

4.2 **Records of Parental Complaints**

The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))

Purpose Federal Regulations, [45 CFR 98.32, 1998] require that a procedure for maintaining substantiated parental complaints be adopted by the Department as grantee of the Child Day Care Block Grant. This information MUST to be available to the public upon request. The following procedure for making and documenting referrals applies to the department staff and to Resource and Referral Agencies that contract with DPHHS.

Definitions Complaint: the process by which a parent, guardian, or other interested individual, reports concerns regarding licensing violations or the care received by a child from a child day care provider.

Department: Department of Public Health & Human Services

Validated Complaint: upon completion of an investigation the Child Care Licensing staff and/or Community Social Worker determines that the allegations of the complaint occurred or are occurring.

Not Validated Complaint: upon completion of the investigation, the Child Care Licensing staff and/or Community Social Worker determines that the allegations of the complaint did not occur, or is

unable to make a determination due to lack of evidence.

CPS: child protective services.

CCL: the Child Care Licensing Staff of the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

CCR&R: the district Child Care Resource and Referral agencies.

CAN: child abuse and neglect.

Procedure

Complaints may be reported either to the local DPHHS child protection office, DPHHS licensing staff, or to a CCR&R agency. When a complaint is received by the Department, staff will obtain from the caller information about the incident and the name and phone number of both the complainant and the provider about whom they are making the complaint.

**DPHHS
ACTION**

If the complaint is a child protection issue, the DPHHS CPS unit will conduct an investigation. The investigating worker shall confer with the CCL their initial findings, and if necessary, make a formal request for negative licensing action pending the completion of the investigation.

The licensing program may decide to conduct a separate licensing investigation or conduct a joint investigation with the CPS social worker. If any negative licensing action is taken, the CCL will notify the local CCR&R to inform them of the action taken.

**Types of
Complaints**

Complaints received will be documented according to the following two classifications:

1. child protection (CPS); and
2. licensing and registration issues.

A child protection (CPS) complaint refers to a complaint regarding abuse or neglect of a child. This means that acts or omissions of a child's parent or other person responsible for the child may harm or threaten to harm the normal physical or mental health or welfare of a child. (41-3-102 MCA.) All reports of suspected abuse or neglect of a child must be reported by the CCR&R agency to the local CPS office.

A complaint regarding licensing issues refers to concerns, other than CPS complaints, regarding alleged violations of child day care

facility standards, requirements, regulations, and the direct care of children at the child day care facility.

CCR&R Action

Ideally, CCR&R Programs should not receive CPS complaints;

However, when a call is made to the CCR&R agency office the staff person obtains all available information and documents that information. If the complaint is a child protection complaint, the caller shall be encouraged to personally report the incident to department and is given the appropriate names and phone numbers to call. If the caller is a professional person legally mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect, (i.e. doctor, teacher, day care staff) CCR&R agency staff will inform the caller that by law the referral must be made to the local child protection office.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the CCR&R agency staff will forward a copy of the complaint to the appropriate agency contact: for licensing issues the information will be sent to the local CCL and for CPS issues, information will be forwarded to the CPS intake unit for appropriate intervention. Referral of complaints will be made to DPHHS by phone with a follow-up in writing within 72 hours.

If there is a question whether the reported complaint is child protection or licensing, **it will be first treated as a child protection complaint.** Copies of the complaint will be automatically forwarded from the CCR&R office to the local CPS Intake Unit. The local child care licensing staff will also receive a copy for review of appropriate licensing regulations.

Removal from
referral list

To prevent inadvertent referrals to an inappropriate provider, the CCR&R will be notified in writing of any negative licensing action (e.g. suspension, denial, revocation, etc.) taken against a day care provider.

Depending upon the results of the investigation, a child care provider can be removed from the referral listing upon request by the child care licensor or other designated department staff.

A provider can be removed from the CCR&R Referral list for the following reasons:

- If the provider is under investigation by CPS;
- If the provider is under investigation by Child Care Licensing;
- If negative licensing has occurred as a result of either a CPS

- or Licensing investigation or
As a result of other investigative findings which result in serious licensing concerns, but do not mitigate negative licensing action.

Facilities with no current, valid registration or license shall not be referred. However, CCR&R agencies do offer referrals to LEGALLY OPERATING programs, such as preschools, after-school programs, etc, who may not be required by law to obtain a license or registration.

The provider's facility will not be referred by the CCR&R until they have had contact from the CCL requesting referrals resume, or until the registration or license is restored to a regular status.

It is the responsibility of the Child care Licensor to inform the child care provider his/her name has been removed from the referral listing.

**Requests for
information
from the public**

Any person wishing to know the status of a day care facility's license or registration certificate may call the local DPHHS office or District Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

If negative licensing action has been taken against a day care facility, the public can be informed:

That a license has been reduced to a provisional or restricted status;

That a license has been suspended or revoked, pending the completion of a corrective action plan;

the name of provider; and/or

phone number of provider.

Substantiated complaints against a licensed or registered facility may be disclosed to a person requesting information on that facility. The nature of the substantiated complaint (leaving child unattended, lack of supervision) may be shared but names or specific details **may not** be disclosed. In cases when a complaint is made, but is unsubstantiated upon investigation, information pertaining to the nature of the allegations shall not be shared.

Confidentiality

Any information a caller gives in regard to a complaint must be

considered confidential. Information is not to be discussed with other persons unless authorized by department policy or Montana law i.e., licensing staff, child protection workers, etc.

In regard to informing Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies of licensing actions, the DPHHS worker may reveal that an investigation is ongoing. The department will notify the CCR&R that a license has been reduced to provisional, restricted, or suspended status pending completion of corrective action plan, or that the license has been revoked.

When a referral regarding licensing regulations is substantiated and the allegations do not relate to child abuse or neglect as defined in 41-3-102 MCA, the licensing worker shall inform the CCR&R of the substantiated referral.

If as a result of investigative findings, the department determines that services under the Training and Technical Assistance program offered by the CCR&R agency are necessary, the Child Care licensor will share with the CCR&R staff the non-compliances found and an appropriate course or training will be developed. This information is to be considered confidential by CCR&R staff.

CCR&R staff shall not reveal details of any case involving child abuse or neglect or of licensing actions. Requests for details of licensing actions are to be referred to the local licensing office. All names of the child(ren) and the family must be deleted from the register that is available to the public.

Reference 45 CFR 98.5 (f)
 Section 41-3-201, MCA
 Section 41-3-205, MCA

This version of this policy is what exists in the Licensing Program Policy Manual. However, the policy is currently being revised, but has not been approved by QAD management.

4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings

The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

Unless prohibited by court order, Montana Administrative rule requires parents or guardians to have unlimited access to the day care facility during day care hours. However, recently, personal safety issues have redefined this requirement. Under current licensing policy providers are allowed to lock the facility door as long as the door is

equipped with a single action locking. The installation of this lock, however, cannot prohibit access by parents. It is the provider's responsibility if one of these approved devices are used, to adequately inform parents and make appropriate arrangements with the parents to be able to access their children at any time.

Parents are informed of their right to access their child when they apply for benefits. Parents read and initial several statements on a 'Family's Rights & Responsibilities' form, including, "I have a right to have access at any time while he/she's at child care."

4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: **the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Public Assistance Bureau.**

- "appropriate child care": The child care provider meets applicable state standards.
- "reasonable distance":
 - a) If the family is without either their own (or arranged) transportation, and there is no public transportation, then their home or work site must be no more than 1 mile from the child care provider.
 - b) If the family has their own (or arranged) transportation, their home or work site is within one-hour travel distance, one-way, from the child care provider.
- "unsuitability of informal child care": Care that does not meet applicable state licensing standards, although it may be the parent's choice.
- "affordable child care arrangements": The total parental (caretaker relative or person acting in loco parentis) co-payment and "above and beyond" obligation does not exceed 25% of gross family income.

PART 5

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

5.1 Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides

- 5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; and describes the expected results of the activities. For the infant and toddler earmark, the State must note in its description of the activities what is the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds.

Infants and toddlers:

Montana funds four primary activities through the Infant/Toddler Earmark.

1. INFANT TODDLER CERTIFICATION:

Montana has created an Infant/Toddler Caregiver certification. A child care provider certified as an infant toddler care giver must complete one of the following training requirements:

- The Infant Toddler CDA
- The Family Child Care CDA + 30 hours of Infant/Toddler coursework
- The complete, four-module, Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (minimum of 60 hours of instruction).
- A Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship that includes 30-hours of Infant/Toddler coursework.
- An AA Degree in Early Childhood that includes 30 hours of Infant Toddler coursework
- BA Degree in Early Childhood that includes 30 hours of Infant Toddler coursework.

The certification training is available to all caregivers statewide to improve the quality of care for young children.

2. INFANT TODDLER CERTIFIED TRAINERS

- *The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers* (WestEd) serves as the basic Infant/Toddler curriculum. This program is offered on a regular basis throughout the state. Instructors certified through WestEd provide the Department a training plan that includes an on-site observation component for each student's program. Montana has approximately twelve WestEd certified trainers who offer the four- module (60 hr) coursework.

Certified trainers receive annual advanced training in Infant Toddler curriculum. This training is offered through University of Montana-

Western and is based on the latest research in the area of Infant/Toddler development; as well as, adult education techniques.

3. THE BEST BEGINNINGS CERTIFIED INFANT TODDLER STIPEND PROGRAM is offered to help reduce the turnover of infant toddler certified caregivers in early childhood programs. The goal of this stipend is to maximize the continuity of care for as many infants and toddlers as possible in child care settings.
 - Any Montana certified infant toddler caregiver who is working a minimum of 5 hours per day (M-F) providing direct care to infants and/or toddlers (0-36 months of age) in a licensed/registered facility may apply for the stipend program. Additionally, the certified infant toddler caregiver must be an active participant of the Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at any level on the Career Path.
 - Program participants must maintain continuous employment with the same licensed or registered child care facility for the 18-month period beginning either January 1 or July 1 to receive the total stipend of \$1,600.
 - Stipends are awarded in six-month increments and paid directly to the Montana certified infant toddler caregiver. A stipend is paid following the completion of each six-month period and must be requested within 30 days of the end of each six-month period.
 - Participants must provide direct care to infants/toddlers in the same licensed/registered child care facility for the majority of time the infants or toddlers the caregiver is responsible for attends.
4. THE BEST BEGINNINGS INFANT TODDLER MINI GRANT PROGRAM. These mini grants are designed to cover cost of Infant Toddler Training, Infant Toddler developmentally appropriate equipment, supplies, and/or meeting Infant Toddler regulatory requirements. The goal of the Infant/Toddler Mini Grant is to improve the quality of care available for infants and toddlers. Maximum awards are \$1,500 for licensed child care centers and \$1,000 for registered group and family child care homes.

Montana is in the preliminary stages of funding two additional activities through the Infant/Toddler Earmark.

1. THE BEST BEGINNINGS INFANT TODDLER ADVISOR/RESEARCHER. Montana is in the investigative stage of contracting with an Infant Toddler advisor/researcher to help with the design of Infant Toddler programs that are research based and lead to desired outcomes. The role of this advisor/researcher would include: advising on individual program RFPs, identifying current applicable national research, identifying and recommending methods or research designs of filling gaps in Montana's system.

2. THE BEST BEGINNINGS INFANT TODDLER MENTORING PROGRAM. Once Montana has contracted with an Infant Toddler advisor/researcher an Infant Toddler Mentoring Program will be designed.

Resource and referral services:

DPHHS contracts with the Montana Child Care Resource & Referral Network to utilize earmarked funds to enhance the statewide community-based services offered by the MCCR&R Network's 12 member agencies.

The MCCR&R Network, in collaboration with the DPHHS Early Childhood Services Bureau, has targeted two priority areas of service. These are the School-Age Care Project and Network Services.

- The purpose of MCCR&R Network Services is to build state level collaboration between child care, health and education organizations in order to promote quality, availability and access to child care; to support standardization and improvement of local child care resource and referral services; to collect and report state level child care data; and to increase public awareness of child care as an economic development issue. In this capacity MCCR&R sponsors quarterly meetings of 12 member agency coordinators, an annual CCR&R Staff Training Conference, staff training in NACCRRAware referral software and CCUBS subsidy program, annual reporting of licensed child care capacity, caregiver employment, subsidy payment, and distribution of Best Beginnings Child Care Quality Improvement funds by county.

School-age child care:

- The purpose of the School-Age Care Project is to bring licensed and legally unlicensed school-age care services into coordination with other local and state level afterschool initiatives including 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and 4-H. Through coordination of the Montana Afterschool Network, MCCR&R works to improve the availability and quality of school-age care statewide. MCCR&R sponsors afterschool caregiver training events, state level collaboration meetings, and public outreach and awareness activities. MCCR&R publishes annual Afterschool Supply & Demand Maps, a bi-annual newsletter, e-mail updates to the field, and an afterschool website.

- 5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds):

\$ 885,828 (4 %)

- 5.1.3 Check either "Yes" or "No" for each activity listed to indicate the activities the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

	Yes	No
• Comprehensive consumer education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Activities to promote inclusive child care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 5.1.4 Describe each activity that is checked "Yes" above, identify the entity(ies) providing the activity, and describe the expected results of the activity.

GRANTS TO PROVIDERS

Best Beginnings offers annual grants to licensed and registered child care providers to enhance or develop quality child care programs while expanding and improving access to quality child care for low income families. These grants may be renewed on an annual basis for a period of up to three years based on performance. To be eligible to participate child care providers must be participating in the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry and have achieved a Level III or higher on the Career Path. Maximum grant awards

for licensed centers is \$15,000, registered group child care homes is \$10,000 and \$5,000 for registered family child care homes. Grants are awarded to providers who demonstrate a strong link to professionalism in the field of early childhood; a commitment to providing high quality care in safe and healthy environments; and a commitment to the development and retention of highly skilled and knowledgeable staff.

MINI GRANTS

Best Beginnings offers Child Care Mini Grants that are quick and easy for child care providers to apply for at any time during the year and are awarded on a quarterly basis. Licensed or registered child care providers must be participating in the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioners Registry and can be at any level on the Career Path. These funds may be used to replace or acquire equipment, purchase developmentally appropriate toys and/or supplies, meet regulatory requirements, and to hire substitute care to enable provider and/or staff to attend trainings, conferences and/or workshops. Maximum awards are \$1,500 for licensed child care centers and \$1,000 for registered group and family child care homes.

IMPROVING SALARIES AND OTHER COMPENSATION FOR CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

A well-trained, consistent caregiver is the key ingredient in the recipe for good early care and education. All of the quality initiatives that Best Beginnings offers are helping to improve salaries and other compensations that are building the supply and quality of child care in our communities.

- **Montana's Star Rating Program:** Child care providers may qualify for increased subsidy rates by obtaining a one or two star rating by meeting requirements listed in the table below:

QUALITY INDICATOR	1-STAR REQUIREMENT (+ 10%)	2-STAR REQUIREMENT (+ 15%)
License Duration	2 or 3 year extended, non-probationary license or registration	2 or 3 year extended, non-probationary license or registration
Accreditation	Not accredited	Accredited by NAEYC, NAFCC, or NSACA
Staff Training	75% of Center (50% of Group) primary care giving staff at Level 2 or higher on the Career Path	75% of Center (50% of Group) primary care giving staff at Level 2 or higher, including one full-time staff at Level 3 or higher, on the Career Path.
Developmental Plan	Plan must be satisfactory	Automatically fulfilled by accreditation

QUALITY INDICATOR	1-STAR REQUIREMENT (+ 10%)	2-STAR REQUIREMENT (+ 15%)
Parental Involvement Plan	Plan must be satisfactory	Automatically fulfilled by accreditation
Personnel Policies	Plan must be satisfactory	Automatically fulfilled by accreditation

ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF EARLY LANGUAGE, LITERACY, PRE-READING, AND EARLY MATH CONCEPTS DEVELOPMENT

Early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts development are addressed in the Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base, which has been revised and updated to align with Montana's Early Learning Guidelines. Montana has written its Early Learning Guidelines to include all curriculum areas, which include literacy, pre-reading, and math concepts development. A "cross-walking" tool is being developed in collaboration with the Head Start State Collaboration office. This "cross-walking" tool addresses how the Montana Early Learning Guidelines align with Head Start Performance Standards, Head Start Child Outcomes, The Head Start Prism instrument, the Montana Early Care & Education Knowledge Base, and the Montana K-12 Standards.

Training opportunities relating to children's curriculum areas are delivered through Montana's training system for quality early childhood education. Montana early childhood higher education options all include specific curriculum course work.

5.1.5 Is any entity identified in sections 5.1.1 or 5.1.4 a non-governmental entity?

☒ Yes, the following entities named in this part are non-governmental:
Name:
Type:

☐ No.

5.2 ***Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development***

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, each Lead Agency is asked to assess its State's progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts and a plan for the education and training of child care providers. The third component of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, planning for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams, was addressed in Section 2.1.2.

5.2.1 **Status of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) regarding language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts for three to five year-olds.

- ☐ **Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: _____
- ☐ **Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: _____
- ☐ **Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as Attachment _____
- ☒ **Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as Attachment **J** _____
- ☐ **Revising.** A State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as Attachment _____
- ☐ **Other (describe):** _____

Describe the progress made by the State in developing voluntary guidelines for early learning since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

Montana's Early Learning Guidelines were developed and are being distributed and disseminated throughout the State of Montana. We are currently working on the development of a companion parent document.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards?

- ☒ Yes. If yes, describe.

The Montana Early Learning Guidelines are written so that early childhood professionals understand what children ages three to five need to know, understand, and be able to do. The curriculum or domain areas addressed align with Montana's K-12 content standards and demonstrate a developmental continuum.

☐ No.

Please attach a copy of the guidelines. If the guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address:

www.montana.edu/ecp/MTearlylearningguidelines.doc

5.2.2 Domains of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning. Do the guidelines address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Do the guidelines address domains not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart*, such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, creative arts, or other domains?

☒ Yes. If yes, describe.

Montana's Early Learning Guidelines address the Good Start, Grow Smart required domains, (language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts), as well as, creative arts, physical development and health, science, social-emotional development, and social studies.

☐ No

Have guidelines been developed for children in age groups not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (children other than those aged three to five)?

☐ Yes. If yes, describe.
☒ No

The development of early learning guidelines for ages zero to three is in the planning/development stage.

5.2.3 Implementation of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning. Describe the process the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines. How are (or will) community, cultural, linguistic and individual variations, as well as the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in

implementation? Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as Attachment **K**

In September 2004, the Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Agency trainers attended a “train the trainers” session. A session that presented the Montana Early Learning Guidelines, and related the document to ECE practice was presented at the annual, statewide Early Childhood Conference, attended by a wide variety of early childhood professionals. Outreach to the Head Start community in Montana began in December 2004. Outreach to statewide early childhood professionals has continues through presentations to various regional early childhood groups. Special attention to a variety of child care settings is built into these presentations and workshops.

A tool kit of training ideas and methods is being developed for trainers and Higher education. A parent companion document is being developed and outreach to public schools and other public agencies is currently being scheduled. Outreach will continue throughout 2005 – 2007, updating presentations to meet the needs of various interested parties.

All components of the Montana Early Learning Guidelines are culturally appropriate for Montana’s families.

5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning. As applicable, describe the State's plan for **assessing** the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines. Written reports of these efforts are included as Attachment ____

5.2.5 State Plans for Professional Development. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education.

- ☐ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft is included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment ____
- ☒ **Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in a plan for professional development since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

Montana has developed a comprehensive, coordinated career development system for practitioners working in every type of early childhood setting. The system is aimed at increasing professionalism in the field of Early Childhood and ultimately linking compensation to increased skill, experience and education.

The Early Childhood Project at Montana State University-Bozeman manages the Early Care and Education Career Development office. The office manages a three-legged system for career development, which is part of the Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiative. The system includes: 1) the Early Care and Education Training Approval System and Trainer Directory; 2) the Early Care and Education Knowledge Base, and 3) the Early Care and Education Career Path: <http://www.montana.edu/ecp/>

Montana's goals for Career Development are to:

1. Define what practitioners need to know,
2. Develop a formalized multi-level education and training system for early childhood,
3. Ensure that training is high quality and meets the needs of practitioners,
4. Provide equal access to education and training through innovative delivery and a coordinated system of planning, promoting and implementing learning opportunities,
5. Promote recognition and increased compensation by formal documentation of practitioners professional development,
6. Celebrate cultural and developmental diversity of practitioners, children and families, and
7. Help parents make informed choices about early care and education options for their children.

Montana's twelve Child Care Resource and Referral agencies provide early childhood practitioners with a variety of approved trainings and technical assistance. Practitioners are also given the opportunity to attend approved trainings offered by other agencies in their communities along with distance learning opportunities that have been developed by Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Child Care Plus+, and ECC college coursework available on the internet

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include:	Yes	No
A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuum of training and education to form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

a career path		
Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A system to track practitioners' training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Credentials – Please state for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors' credential, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each Yes response, reference the page(s) in the plan and briefly describe the Lead Agency's efforts.

Montana's Professional Development system requires all trainings to be embedded with Montana's Early Learning Guidelines.

The plan was developed to be inclusive of all types of early childhood practitioners in all types of settings. A Career Path with nine levels from pre-professional to a doctorate degree with an early childhood emphasis was implemented. The Pre-Professional Level is intended to bring beginning caregivers and even high school students onto the path with minimal training and experience. Practitioners who have completed the Child Care Development Specialist Apprenticeship Program at a Level 4, which then allows extra benefits, to apply for Best Beginnings grant programs

The Career Path has two levels that reflect preparation for the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, one with college credit and one without. The twenty-four credit series offered by UM-Western in nine communities around the state is fully articulated to associate degree programs and four-year institutions. Montana's community and tribal colleges also have articulation agreements.

The Career Development Advisory Board and ECP staff are developing a draft plan for Trainer Development to enhance current status of the Trainer Directory. In addition, trainers subscribe to Training Solutions E-Newsletter that is distributed bimonthly through the Trainer List Serv and are encouraged to attend

Adult Learning I and II that is offered in a different geographical location each year to optimize participation and reduce the distance barriers faced in Montana.

For each No response, indicate whether the Lead Agency intends to incorporate these components.

Are the opportunities available:	Yes	No
Statewide	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Describe how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.

The Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base underwent an extensive revision in the past year and its 2nd edition was published in December 2004. The Early Childhood Project facilitated the revision process. Every content area was reviewed and revised by members of the Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium and feedback was widely solicited in a variety of ways. The 'Curriculum' section was the most comprehensive rewrite and reflects Montana's Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs). Both documents include specific curriculum sections on Language and Literacy and Mathematics and Numeracy. Training for trainers on both documents have been conducted statewide. CCR&R's and other training sponsors will continue to develop and offer specific training about the ELGs in their upcoming training calendars. The ELG document is being used as a text in many college Early Childhood Education curriculum courses.

Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

- ☒ Yes. Describe, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.

Montana has a variety of programs to promote training and continuing education and provide incentives to students to continue their education:

- Merit Pay awards \$500 to practitioners, who apply for, develop and complete an individualized training plan of 50 hours of training within a year. The plan must address training within the Knowledge Base content areas that include all areas of early childhood curriculum.
- Merit Pay awards \$750 to undergraduate/post graduate students enrolled in early childhood higher education that leads to a CDA, AA or BA/BS, MA degree in Early Childhood.
- Merit Pay awards \$400 to practitioners, who apply for, and complete the 60-hour West Ed Infant Toddler training which allows them to become a Montana Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver.
- CDA Assessment Scholarships to help students pay the cost of CDA assessment.
- Best Beginnings Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver Stipend Program awards Montana Certified Infant Toddler caregivers, who are working a minimum of 5 hours per day directly with infants and toddlers, a maximum stipend amount of \$1,600 over an eighteen month time period.
- Montana has begun the preliminary planning on building incentives, such as the I/T stipend, for teachers working with 3-5 year olds. Linking such stipends to specific training completed in the ELGs and development of a comprehensive self-assessment utilizing the Knowledge Base are being discussed as possible viable strategies.

☐ No. If no, is there any plan to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education?

What are the expected **outcomes** of the State's professional development plan and efforts to improve the skills of child care providers? As applicable, how does (or will) the State assess the effectiveness of its plan and efforts? If so, how does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape its professional development plan and training/education for child care providers?

Expected Outcomes for Montana's Professional Development Plan are:

- Increased quality and accessibility to high quality training opportunities that address all content areas of the Knowledge Base;
- A continuum of training and education from entry level to intermediate and advanced to meet the range of needs among providers for inclusion on a statewide training calendar;
- Identification of gaps in training and development of programs and practices to maximize resources and depth of training,
- Coordinating education and training activities with a variety of organizations including but not limited to:

-
- a) Head Start and Early Head Start;
 - b) The Montana Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium,
 - c) The Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council
 - d) The Montana Resource and Referral Network,
 - e) The Montana Child Care Association,
 - f) The Montana Association for the Education of Young Children; and
 - g) The Montana Career Development Advisory Board.
- Promotion of increased compensation for practitioners who have achieved higher levels on the Career Path and other measures of quality, including Best Beginnings program development of the Star Program, Infant Toddler Stipend Program, and the revision of the Merit Pay Program to include Infant Toddler training and Higher Education training to better meet the needs of practitioner students.
 - Development of a framework and infrastructure for the provision of a well-trained and educated early childhood workforce across all program settings;
 - Partner to obtain current early childhood workforce information on wages, benefits, and education through research studies for both center, family and group child care homes and utilize the results to build programs to improve compensation and inform policy makers. A Center Directors' Project is currently underway to assess the specific professional development needs of this population. The project involves conference call focus groups, a statewide survey, and a Director Symposium.
 - The Early Childhood Project will be participating in the national Data 4 Mapping Project to create core data elements for Registries nationwide to promote consistency in data collection and analysis about the early childhood workforce in the US and thus inform policy.
 - Maintaining a child care practitioner-training registry on a statewide data base.
 - Conduct two Career Development Advisory board meetings annually with the May meeting evaluating achievement of the annual Work Plan and developing goals and objectives into a detailed action plan for the upcoming year.
 - The ECP undergoes program review annually with their ECSB program monitor and receives a status report based upon that on-site review. Ongoing assessment and feedback is received on a daily basis through email, phone and written correspondence to the ECP, all of which is responded to individually and passed along to the board or other entity for further consideration. This contributes to the effectiveness and dynamic nature of the system.

PART 6**HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS**

(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

- ☒ Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.
☐ No. Describe which center-based providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan?
(§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

- ☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:
☒ No

However, Montana is in the process of updating licensing requirements with regard to center director and primary caregiver qualifications and qualifications with regard to persons who provide care exclusively to school aged children, among other proposed changes. With that, the State is intending to propose that center directors obtain 15 hours of approved training on an annual basis. The current regulation only requires 8 hours.

6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

- Building and physical premises safety

- Health and safety training

6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- ☒ Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.
☐ No. Describe which group home providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

☒ No

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

- ☒ Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.
☐ No. Describe which family child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

☒ No

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above?

- ☐ Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.
☒ No. Describe which in-home child care providers are exempt from licensing under State law and answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

Legally Unregistered Providers—these providers are defined as those who provide care to one or two children from separate families or the child of one family. These providers are LEGAL according to state law and as such qualify for CCDF funds, but they are not licensed or registered.

- 6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

☒ No

- 6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

In-home providers, otherwise known as “legally unregistered providers” (LUPs) are not subject to the same level of health and safety requirements as registered or licensed providers. They must however, meet the following requirements:

1. Be 18 years of age;
2. Be mentally and physically capable of providing child care that meets safety, health and other basic child care requirements;
3. Not have a substantiated report involving harm, or physical or sexual abuse to children or adults;
4. Not be convicted or adjudicated of a crime involving harm to children, or physical or sexual violence against any person;
5. Not be included in the parent's cash assistance payment;
6. Is not currently diagnosed or receiving therapy or medication for a mental illness or emotional disturbance which might create a risk to children in care;
7. Is not chemically dependent upon drugs or alcohol;
8. Agree to attend an orientation session within 60 days of approval to participate in the program. This orientation training session at a minimum by law and administrative rule, will consist of at least the following topics:
 - Health protection;
 - Child safety;
 - Child development and well being;
 - Intake record keeping;
 - Staffing requirements;
 - Universal precautions;
 - Insurance requirements.
9. Provide care to the children of one family or, if the children are from different families, may care for two or fewer children; and
10. Not be a parent or person acting in loco parentis.

Legally unregistered providers, as stated in bullet number 8, must attend an orientation session within 60 days of approval to participate in the program. This orientation session is designed to give all providers--including registered and licensed providers-- information about health and safety standards (including

information on immunizations, building safety, and equipment safety), state payment information, business planning, child care nutrition, and information on creating a positive, developmentally appropriate environment. Therefore, legally unregistered providers are made aware of the requirements through the orientation process.

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)

Legally unregistered providers, through the application process, self declare that they are sharing immunization information with the parents whose children are cared for by the provider.

- Building and physical premises safety
LUPs self declare through an application checklist that the building meets minimum safety requirements. (Attachment 'N').

LUPs are given information through the orientation session about building safety and physical space safety.

- Health and safety training
LUPs must attend an orientation session within six months of providing care. During this session, they are made aware of health and safety information.

LUPs self declare, through the application process, they understand the health and safety requirements. As for additional training offered in the health and safety areas, LUPs are invited to the training, but are not required to attend

6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A))
Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- ☒ **All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- ☐ **All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- ☐ **Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

☒ Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:

All providers are visited unannounced for inspections of licensure, complaints, or 20% surveys.

Day Care Centers receive at least two visits per year unless the facility has qualified for an extended license. One of the two visits is for the purposes of renewing the license, while the second visit gives the department to observe the 'program' and validate other requirements which may have been a concern during the renewal visit.

Family and Group Day Care Homes are not inspected annually, however, 20% of all family and group homes are inspected on a yearly basis. Follow up inspections may occur if the deficiencies were such that an observation of compliance was deemed necessary.

☐ No

- Are child care providers subject to background checks?

☒ Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):

All licensed, registered and LUP providers are subject to a criminal background checks as well as a Child Protective Services background checks. Licensed and registered providers are also subject to Tribal criminal and protective services checks. These checks are conducted on an annual basis. New caregivers have background checks performed upon employment and annually thereafter.

☐ No

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)
☒ Yes, and the following describes the State's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

By administrative rule, providers are required to report serious injuries that require medical treatment. The providers can either submit a written incident report, or may contact the local child care licenser and verbally report the incident.

☐ No

- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

State Law mandates that the department must visit and inspect at least 20% of all registered providers. As a matter of policy, the program has decided that all newly registered facilities will receive a visit within 120 days of being registered. So, not only are we visiting 20% of facilities, we are also visiting new providers. This effort has helped those new providers understand and comply with the rules early on.

All day care centers are inspected at least two times a year—unless these facilities have obtained an extended license. One visit must pertain to the licensing process, while the second is an observation visit and can address and follow up on any concerns found during the licensing inspection. Centers are also required to have inspections from the local health department as well as the fire department.

6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- ☒ Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- ☒ Children who receive care in their own homes.
- ☐ Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- ☒ Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

PART 7
HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES

(Only the Territories complete Part 7.)

7.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all center-based care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers in the Territories
(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all group home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers in the Territories

(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all family child care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers in the Territories

(658E(c)(2)(F), §98.41(a), §98.16(j))

For all in-home care, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

7.5 Exemptions to Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives may be exempted from health and safety requirements: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care). (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A)). Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- ☐ **All** relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- ☐ **All** relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- ☐ **Some or all** relative providers are subject to **different** health and safety requirements from those described in sections 7.1 - 7.4 and the following describes those different requirements and the relatives they apply to:

7.6 Enforcement of Territorial Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how Territorial health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?

- ☐ Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
- ☐ No

Are child care providers subject to background checks?

- ☐ Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):
- ☐ No

Does the Territory require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)

- ☐ Yes, and the following describes the Territory's reporting requirements and how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):
- ☐ No

Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

7.7 Exemptions from Territorial Immunization Requirements

The Territory assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the Territorial public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The Territory exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- ☐ Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- ☐ Children who receive care in their own homes.
- ☐ Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- ☐ Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

APPENDIX 1
PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 106-554)

The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

APPENDIX 2 ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must define the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

1. *attending* (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable) –A person is considered to be attending, whether part-time or full-time, if they remain in good standing with either the job training or education program in which they are enrolled. Child care is allowed for scheduled class time and the time necessary to commute between the parent’s home, the day care facility and the education or training facility.
2. *in loco parentis* –An adult friend or relative with whom the child resides, whether or not custody is court ordered.
3. *job training and educational program* – A job-training program is a program designed to assist eligible families to become self-sufficient by providing needed employment-related activities and supportive services. An education program is a program that is recognized by the State of Montana as an accredited education program. Job training and educational programs include but are not limited to vocational-technical schools, business colleges, junior colleges, universities, and/or special classes which may be classified as “employment related training”. An educational program may also include students working to support their education (i.e. work study).
4. *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) – Children under the age of 19, with disabilities or cognitive delay, who are not able without assistance, to properly manage or care for his/her person. Appropriate clinical authorities must document this determination.
5. *protective services* -To qualify for child protective services (CPS) child care, the child must need care because of the danger of neglect or abuse. The need for protective services is determined by county social workers. CPS child care for foster care families and respite care require approval of DPHHS Family Services Regional Administrators.
6. *residing with* – A child must live in the same household as the parent, or person acting in loco parentis, during the period for which child care services are requested.
7. *special needs child* – A child with special needs is an individual age 0 to 18, with an Individual Education Plan or an Individual Family Service Plan, who, because of his/her disability or cognitive delay, is not able to care for him or herself without assistance.
8. *very low income* – Families whose income falls below the Montana TANF Monthly Income Standards/Shelter Obligation benefit standards to be used with adults included in

the TANF filing/assistance unit [Montana TANF Manual Sec. 001, page 4]. Beginning August 1, 2003, the following standards apply:

Family Size	Very Low Monthly Income
1	\$ 221
2	\$ 298
3	\$ 375
4	\$ 452
5	\$ 530

9. *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) – An individual is working when s/he performs any paid type of legal labor on either a full or part time basis and has documents to show income received. Self-employment is determined for the person submitting evidence based on IRS income guidelines.

- ☐ Two parent families must work a minimum of 120 hours per month.
- ☐ Single parent families must work a minimum of 60 hour per month.
- ☐ Single parents, while attending school full time, must work a minimum of 40 hour per month.
- ☐ Disabled individuals, who are determined unable to care for their children by a physician or licensed psychologist, are not subject to a minimum hourly work requirement.

10. Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:

(a)TANF families –

TANF families are families who participate in an approved family investment activities in Montana's welfare reform program.

(b)foster care –

Twenty-four hour out-of-home care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has placement responsibility.

(c)medical emergencies –

An unexpected medical condition of a parent or child, interrupting employment for less than three months. The parent must have employment to which they will return and a physician's statement identifying the medical need for rest.

(d)respite care -

The short-term supervision or care of a foster child in an emergency or on an intermittent basis.

(e) *teen attending high school –*

A teen parent attending high school is guaranteed child care assistance during school and work hours. Child care is not provided for after-school study time.

Resource and Referral Agencies

District VII HRDC

7 North 31st Street
PO Box 2016
Billings, MT 59103-2016
(406) 247-4732 or (800) 433-1411
FAX (406) 248-2943
dhartman@state.mt.us
<http://hrdc7.org>
and
201 4th Street West
Hardin, MT 59034-1705
(406) 665-1895

Child Care Connections

317 E Mendenhall, Suite C
Bozeman, MT 59715-3684
(406) 587-7786 or (800) 962-0418
FAX (406) 587-1682
ccc@childcareconnections.info
www.childcareconnections.info

Butte 4C's

101 East Broadway
Butte, MT 59701-9335
(406) 723-4019 or (800) 794-4061
FAX (406) 723-6982
butte4cs@bigskyhsd.com
www.butte4-cs.org

Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc.

605 Third Ave South
Glasgow, MT 59230-2408
(406) 228-9431 or (800) 659-3673
FAX (406) 228-2984
jody@nemontel.net

DEAP Child Care Resource & Referral

218 West Bell, Suite 209
Glendive, MT 59330-1644
(406) 377-4909 or (800) 578-4909
FAX (406) 377-6927
deaphix@middrivers.com

Family Connections

600 Central Plaza, Suite 225
Great Falls, MT 59401-3157
(406) 761-6010 or (800) 696-4503
FAX (406) 453-8976
ktuckerman@sofast.net
www.famcon.org

District IV HRDC Child Care Link

2229 5th Ave
Havre, MT 59501-5217
(406) 265-6743 or (800) 640-6743
FAX (406) 265-1312
evansl@hrdc4.havre.mt.us
www.hrdc4.havre.mt.us

Child Care Partnerships

901 North Benton Ave
Helena, MT 59601-2751
(406) 443-4608 or (888) 244-5368
FAX (406) 443-6186
ccp@childcarepartnerships.org
www.childcarepartnerships.org

The Nurturing Center

146 Third Ave West
Kalispell, MT 59901-4428
(406) 756-1414 or (800) 204-0644
FAX (406) 756-1410
info@nurturingcenter.org
www.nurturingcenter.org

District VI HRDC Child Care Link

300 First Ave North, Suite 203
Lewistown, MT 59457-1700
(406) 538-7488 or (800) 766-3018
FAX (406) 538-2843
jmann@state.mt.us

DEAP Child Care Resource & Referral

2200 Box Elder, Suite 151
Miles City, MT 59301-5930
(406) 234-6034 or (800) 224-6034
FAX (406) 234-7018
deap@deapmt.org

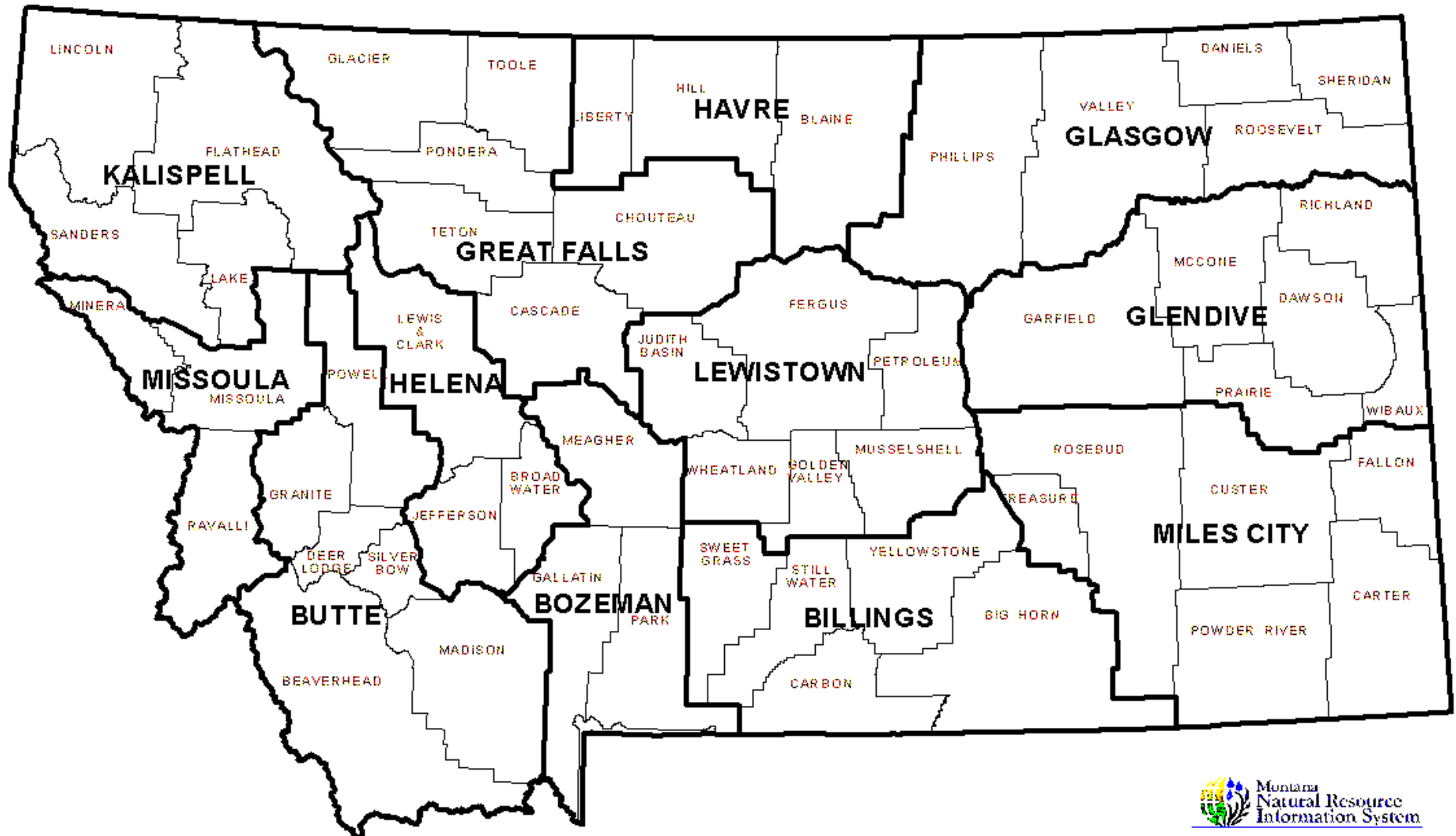
Child Care Resources

127 East Main, Suite 314
PO Box 7038
Missoula, MT 59807-7038
(406) 728-6446 or (800) 728-6446
FAX (406) 549-1189
ccr@childcareresources.org
www.childcareresources.org
and
316 North 3rd Street, Suite 160
Hamilton, MT 59840-2475
(406) 363-4599

5/12/2004

Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Locations

Department of Public Health and Human Services



**State Plan Hearing Comments
May 24, 2005**

Montana Child Care Rates
Based on the 75th Percentile of the June 30, 2004 Market Rate Survey
Rates Effective July 1, 2004

CCR&R District	Facility Type	Child Daily	Child Hourly	Infant Daily	Infant Hourly
Billings	Center	\$20.00	\$3.80	\$25.00	\$3.90
Billings	Family	\$18.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.30
Billings	Group	\$20.00	\$3.50	\$22.50	\$4.00
Billings	LUP	\$13.50	\$2.30	\$15.00	\$2.50
Bozeman	Center	\$24.80	\$4.00	\$28.50	\$4.30
Bozeman	Family	\$20.30	\$3.50	\$24.00	\$4.00
Bozeman	Group	\$24.00	\$4.00	\$25.00	\$4.50
Bozeman	LUP	\$15.20	\$2.60	\$18.00	\$3.00
Butte	Center	\$17.50	\$3.50	\$19.00	\$2.70
Butte	Family	\$18.00	\$2.70	\$20.00	\$3.00
Butte	Group	\$20.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.00
Butte	LUP	\$13.50	\$2.00	\$15.00	\$2.30
Glasgow	Center	\$20.00	\$2.30	\$20.00	\$2.30
Glasgow	Family	\$18.00	\$2.00	\$18.00	\$2.30
Glasgow	Group	\$18.00	\$2.00	\$18.00	\$2.50
Glasgow	LUP	\$13.50	\$1.50	\$13.50	\$1.70
Glendive	Center	\$18.20	\$2.20	\$20.10	\$2.30
Glendive	Family	\$18.00	\$2.00	\$18.00	\$2.30
Glendive	Group	\$16.00	\$2.00	\$18.00	\$2.30
Glendive	LUP	\$13.50	\$1.50	\$13.50	\$1.70
Great Falls	Center	\$22.00	\$3.60	\$27.50	\$5.00
Great Falls	Family	\$18.00	\$2.90	\$18.00	\$3.00
Great Falls	Group	\$17.00	\$2.80	\$18.00	\$3.00
Great Falls	LUP	\$13.50	\$2.20	\$13.50	\$2.30
Havre	Center	\$20.00	\$3.00	\$21.50	\$3.20
Havre	Family	\$18.00	\$2.50	\$18.00	\$2.50
Havre	Group	\$19.80	\$2.70	\$19.80	\$2.70
Havre	LUP	\$13.50	\$1.90	\$13.50	\$1.90
Helena	Center	\$18.00	\$4.00	\$23.50	\$4.00
Helena	Family	\$17.00	\$2.80	\$18.00	\$3.00
Helena	Group	\$18.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.50
Helena	LUP	\$12.80	\$2.10	\$13.50	\$2.30
Kalispell	Center	\$20.00	\$3.00	\$23.80	\$3.60
Kalispell	Family	\$20.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.30
Kalispell	Group	\$20.00	\$3.50	\$20.00	\$3.50
Kalispell	LUP	\$15.00	\$2.30	\$15.00	\$2.50
Lewistown	Center	\$18.30	\$3.40	\$19.80	\$3.60
Lewistown	Family	\$18.50	\$2.80	\$21.30	\$3.30
Lewistown	Group	\$17.30	\$4.00	\$19.30	\$4.00
Lewistown	LUP	\$13.90	\$2.10	\$16.00	\$2.50
Miles City	Center	\$16.30	\$2.20	\$20.00	\$2.60
Miles City	Family	\$18.00	\$2.50	\$19.50	\$2.50
Miles City	Group	\$17.00	\$2.50	\$17.80	\$2.50
Miles City	LUP	\$13.50	\$1.90	\$14.60	\$1.90

Attachment D - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007


Missoula	Center	\$22.30	\$3.80	\$24.50	\$3.50
Missoula	Family	\$19.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.30
Missoula	Group	\$20.00	\$3.50	\$21.00	\$3.80
Missoula	LUP	\$14.30	\$2.30	\$15.00	\$2.50
State Rate	Center	\$22.00	\$3.80	\$25.00	\$4.00
State Rate	Family	\$18.00	\$3.00	\$20.00	\$3.00
State Rate	Group	\$20.00	\$3.50	\$20.00	\$3.50
State Rate	LUP	\$13.50	\$2.30	\$15.00	\$2.30

Attachment E - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Child care providers keep their rates up-to-date in the Child Care Under the Big Sky Computer System (CCUBS) by notifying their district Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (CCR&R). A provider's rates must be entered before CCUBS will process a subsidy payment on behalf of a family. A provider may update their rates at any time. Policy allows for a 10-day data entry period, however, rates are generally entered promptly because new rates are effective immediately upon entry in the CCUBS system. Child care providers receive specific reminders to communicate rate updates when they complete a child care service plan with the parent and when they invoice for child care services.

Prior to a Market Rate Survey, child care providers are reminded to update their rate information. In June 2004, postcards were mailed to all Family Home, Group Home and Child Care Centers. Providers were encouraged to return the postcards to their CCR&R by June 25 2004. CCR&Rs staff had a few days to complete the data entry process. Provider rate information was queried and analyzed on June 30, 2004.

Sample survey tool (postcard):

	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES/ EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES BUREAU 2004 MARKET RATE SURVEY
Facility Name (please print): _____	
PV #: _____	
Type of Provider (circle):	Family Group Center
Child (Age 2+): Hourly Rate _____ Daily Rate _____	
	Monthly Rate (if applicable) _____
Infant: Hourly Rate _____ Daily Rate _____	
	Monthly Rate (if applicable) _____
If your facility uses a different rate system, please convert to these rate types.	

A copy of the letter that accompanied the postcard follows on the next page:

Child Care Provider Market Rate Adjustment Coming Soon!

June 11, 2004

To: All Family, Group & Center Child Care Providers

From: Department of Public Health & Human Services/ Early Childhood Services
Bureau

RE: Best Beginnings Scholarship Program Market Rate Adjustment (Provider Rates)

Every two years the Department of Public Health & Human Services/ Early Childhood Services Bureau (DPHHS/ ECSB) runs a report on the Child Care Under the Big Sky (CCUBS) computer system to find out the child care provider rates charged to families in each of the 12 Child Care Resource & Referral Districts throughout the state. This report is commonly referred to as the Market Rate Survey. Child Care Resource and Referral agencies update this information on an on-going basis. However it is very important that all providers review their rate information for accuracy and provide any needed corrections or updates at this time, even if you don't serve Best Beginnings Scholarship children.

The department collects this information and sets the "state rate" at the 75th percentile of the local market rate for each CCR&R district (provided adequate funding exists). This affords low-income families the ability to purchase child care in approximately 75% of the child care facilities in their local areas. In the year 2002, the department did not have adequate funds to adjust the "state rate" to the 75th percentile of the 2002 market rate survey. The current "state rate" is based on the child care provider rate information collected in 2000. DPHHS/ ECSB has recently been given permission by the Governor's budget office to adjust current child care provider rates to the 75th percentile of the 2004 market rate survey. The department would like to act on this as quickly as possible.

The department is requesting your assistance with this process by completing the enclosed postcard and mailing it back to your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency by June 25, 2004. With your assistance and with the local CCR&Rs working diligently on getting the current market rate survey results entered into the CCUBS system, it may be possible to have a new rate adjustment implemented in July.

If you have any questions about the Market Rate Survey, please contact your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.

Montana's Sliding Fee Scale

The Child Care Sliding Fee Scale is a guide to determine the family's monthly co-payment obligation to the child care provider. A family, whose income falls below 95% of the federal poverty level, pays a \$10.00 monthly co-payment. Higher co-payments are a product of the family's Non-TANF gross monthly income (GMI) multiplied by the respective co-payment factor:

Monthly Co-payment = GMI x Percentage assigned to the Income Range.

The column headings at the top indicate family size. The row headings on the left indicate 1) the family's gross monthly income (GMI) level, as a percentage of the federal poverty guidelines and, 2) the co-payment percentage, for each income range.

The Child Care Sliding Fee Scale is on the following page.

Montana Child Care Sliding Fee Scale - Effective September 1, 2004

The monthly co-payment is a percentage of the family's gross monthly income (GMI).																
FAMILY SIZE >		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Base	Co-pay	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
95%	FPG GMI	\$989	\$1,241	\$1,492	\$1,744	\$1,996	\$2,248	\$2,499	\$2,751	\$3,003	\$3,255	\$3,506	\$3,758	\$4,010	\$4,262	\$4,513
3%	Co-pay	\$30	\$37	\$45	\$52	\$60	\$67	\$75	\$83	\$90	\$98	\$105	\$113	\$120	\$128	\$135
100%	FPG GMI	\$1,041	\$1,306	\$1,571	\$1,836	\$2,101	\$2,366	\$2,631	\$2,896	\$3,161	\$3,426	\$3,691	\$3,956	\$4,221	\$4,486	\$4,751
4%	Co-pay	\$42	\$52	\$63	\$73	\$84	\$95	\$105	\$116	\$126	\$137	\$148	\$158	\$169	\$179	\$190
105%	FPG GMI	\$1,093	\$1,371	\$1,649	\$1,928	\$2,206	\$2,484	\$2,762	\$3,041	\$3,319	\$3,597	\$3,875	\$4,154	\$4,432	\$4,710	\$4,988
5%	Co-pay	\$55	\$69	\$82	\$96	\$110	\$124	\$138	\$152	\$166	\$180	\$194	\$208	\$222	\$236	\$249
110%	FPG GMI	\$1,145	\$1,436	\$1,728	\$2,019	\$2,311	\$2,602	\$2,894	\$3,185	\$3,477	\$3,768	\$4,060	\$4,351	\$4,643	\$4,934	\$5,226
6%	Co-pay	\$69	\$86	\$104	\$121	\$139	\$156	\$174	\$191	\$209	\$226	\$244	\$261	\$279	\$296	\$314
115%	FPG GMI	\$1,197	\$1,502	\$1,806	\$2,111	\$2,416	\$2,721	\$3,025	\$3,330	\$3,635	\$3,940	\$4,244	\$4,549	\$4,854	\$5,159	\$5,463
7%	Co-pay	\$84	\$105	\$126	\$148	\$169	\$190	\$212	\$233	\$254	\$276	\$297	\$318	\$340	\$361	\$382
120%	FPG GMI	\$1,249	\$1,567	\$1,885	\$2,203	\$2,521	\$2,839	\$3,157	\$3,475	\$3,793	\$4,111	\$4,429	\$4,747	\$5,065	\$5,383	\$5,701
8%	Co-pay	\$100	\$125	\$151	\$176	\$202	\$227	\$253	\$278	\$303	\$329	\$354	\$380	\$405	\$431	\$456
125%	FPG GMI	\$1,301	\$1,632	\$1,964	\$2,295	\$2,626	\$2,957	\$3,289	\$3,620	\$3,951	\$4,282	\$4,614	\$4,945	\$5,276	\$5,607	\$5,939
9%	Co-pay	\$117	\$147	\$177	\$207	\$236	\$266	\$296	\$326	\$356	\$385	\$415	\$445	\$475	\$505	\$535
130%	FPG GMI	\$1,353	\$1,698	\$2,042	\$2,387	\$2,731	\$3,076	\$3,420	\$3,765	\$4,109	\$4,454	\$4,798	\$5,143	\$5,487	\$5,832	\$6,176
10%	Co-pay	\$135	\$170	\$204	\$239	\$273	\$308	\$342	\$377	\$411	\$445	\$480	\$514	\$549	\$583	\$618
135%	FPG GMI	\$1,405	\$1,763	\$2,121	\$2,478	\$2,836	\$3,194	\$3,552	\$3,909	\$4,267	\$4,625	\$4,983	\$5,340	\$5,698	\$6,056	\$6,414
11%	Co-pay	\$155	\$194	\$233	\$273	\$312	\$351	\$391	\$430	\$469	\$509	\$548	\$587	\$627	\$666	\$706
140%	FPG GMI	\$1,457	\$1,828	\$2,199	\$2,570	\$2,941	\$3,312	\$3,683	\$4,054	\$4,425	\$4,796	\$5,167	\$5,538	\$5,909	\$6,280	\$6,651
12%	Co-pay	\$175	\$219	\$264	\$308	\$353	\$397	\$442	\$486	\$531	\$576	\$620	\$665	\$709	\$754	\$798
145%	FPG GMI	\$1,509	\$1,893	\$2,278	\$2,662	\$3,046	\$3,430	\$3,815	\$4,199	\$4,583	\$4,967	\$5,352	\$5,736	\$6,120	\$6,504	\$6,889
13%	Co-pay	\$196	\$246	\$296	\$346	\$396	\$446	\$496	\$546	\$596	\$646	\$696	\$746	\$796	\$846	\$896
150%	FPG GMI	\$1,561	\$1,959	\$2,356	\$2,754	\$3,151	\$3,549	\$3,946	\$4,344	\$4,741	\$5,139	\$5,536	\$5,934	\$6,331	\$6,729	\$7,126
14%	Co-pay	\$219	\$274	\$330	\$386	\$441	\$497	\$552	\$608	\$664	\$719	\$775	\$831	\$886	\$942	\$998
Total Monthly Co-payment = Gross Monthly Income (GMI) x the percentage assigned to the income range, which is based on Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) or \$10, whichever is greater.																
The co-payments listed are minimums and correspond to the lowest level for each income range.																

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Adoptive Support Services:	Excluded	No
Agent Orange Settlement Payments:	Excluded	No
Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Tax Exempt Payments:	Excluded	No
Alien Sponsor Deemed Income:	Excluded	No
AmeriCorps VISTA: The living allowance (stipend) received by participants in the AmeriCorps Program is counted as earned income.	Employment	Yes
Annuity Income: Cash <u>received</u> , and <u>available earnings</u> , from an annuity are countable. Dividends and interest available to individuals are countable, even though these earning may be reinvested.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes
Assistance Payment from Other State:	Cash Assistance	Yes
Bonus Income:	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance Benefits:	Cash Assistance	Yes
Capital Gains from Sale of Personal Property: Capital gains income, resulting from the sale of real or personal property, such as a primary residence, is treated as a lump sum payment.	Lump Sum	Yes
Capital Investment Returns: Returns from capital investments are counted. If the individual is actively engaged in the management of the investment, this may be "Self-employment Income."	Interest, Dividend, Royalties	Yes
Cash Contributions: Cash contributions directly available to the applicant or participant, regardless of the intended use, are counted as unearned income. EXAMPLE: A non-family member gives the caretaker relative \$150 cash to make her car payment. This is a cash contribution directly available to her. However, if the car payment is made directly to the vendor, it is not counted as available to the individual; the payment becomes a "third-party vendor payment."	Other Income	Yes
Child Support "In Excess" Payments:	Child Support	Yes
Child Support Arrearage Amount:	Child Support	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Child Support: Child support income retained by the parent is counted. Prospect the net amount and disregard CSED fees withheld from child support payments. If child support income is irregular, average the income over a period. EXAMPLE: A family begins receiving child support, which comes very irregularly. One payment of \$150 is received in January; another payment of \$75 is received in July. Since the child support is very unpredictable, you are unable to prospect the income. However, if there is a history of year or more, child support may be averaged and prospected.	Child Support	Yes
Child-Only TANF Cash Grant:	TANF Cash Assistance	Yes
College Work Study: Work-study hours count toward the minimum hourly work requirement. NOTE: CCR&Rs count the work hours and the income, while OPA may exclude this as educational income	Employment	Yes
Commissions, Salary or Wages:	Employment	Yes
Community Spouse Income Maintenance Allowance: (Not likely seen in child care families.)	Other Income	Yes
Contract for Deed: The income received, whether principal and/or interest, is counted as unearned income.	Other Income	Yes
Dependent Child's Earned Income – Attending School: The earned income of a dependent child who is attending elementary or high school, regardless of age, is excluded.	Excluded	No
Dependent Child's Earned Income – Not Attending School: A dependent child's income is counted, unless the child is attending school.	Employment	Yes
Disability Benefits:	Disability Benefits	Yes
Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans: Veterans Administration payments to disabled children (now adults) of females who served in Vietnam between February 1961 and May 1975 are excluded.	Excluded	No
Disaster Relief Act: Payments issued because of a Presidential emergency declaration or major disaster, as amended, are excluded. This applies to government and disaster assistance organization payments to individuals.	Excluded	No
Dividend, Interest & Royalty Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Divorce Settlement: A divorce settlement is the division of a couple's assets or resources; it is not income. (However, ongoing child support or alimony payments are counted as income.)	---	No
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): The applicant or participant may receive the EITC with his/her regular wages. The EITC amount should be noted on the wage stubs. EITC may also be received with the individual's annual federal tax refund.	Excluded	No
Educational Income: Educational grants, loans, scholarships, and VA educational payments are not countable income. If the amount is received in a large sum, reduce the income to a monthly amount for the intended period on CCUBS. NOTE: See 'College Work Study' regarding the minimum hourly work requirement.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Employer Paid Insurance or Child Care Benefits Employer contributions toward health or group life insurance, medical expenses, and child care expenses. This includes employer paid flexible benefits, which are not cashable to the employee. EXAMPLE: State Share Credit	Excluded	No
Family Saving for Tomorrow Program (Asset for Independence Act): Family Saving for Tomorrow Program payments are made to a vendor on behalf of the participant. Participants agree to chose set a specific savings goal, either a down payment on a house, start-up costs of a business, or tuition for post-secondary education. The family makes monthly savings deposits, from earned income, for up to three years and receives a two-to-one match on their savings. The match is not counted as income in determining child care scholarship eligibility.	Excluded	No
Farm Income:	Self- Employment	Yes
Farm Loss: A farm loss may not reduce income from other sources, so the amount must be zero.	Self- Employment	No
Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Retraining Funds: TAA supplements Unemployment Insurance benefits to retrain participants and move them back into the workforce. The participant's job skills are evaluated. Retraining benefits are paid directly to a school for a participant's tuition and books. Benefits are also available to cover the participant's rent and utilities, if the participant must maintain a second residence while attending school. While away from the main household, the participant may receive subsistence per diem, based on CONUS rates. NOTE: Unemployment compensation is separate and countable income.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
<p>Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Supportive Services: TAA supplements Unemployment Insurance benefits to retrain participants and move them back into the workforce.</p> <p>Job Search Funding: Travel expenses are reimbursed based on receipts, for the participant to interview for a new position. Reimbursement is limited to \$1,250 per participant.</p> <p>Relocation Funding: Moving expenses, up to \$1,250, are reimbursed for the participant, and their family, who relocates to take a new job or attend school.</p> <p>Relocation Benefit: A \$1,250 benefit is available to assist in establishing the family after relocating.</p> <p>TAA Supplemental Discretionary Grant: A TAA participant may apply, based on financial need, for emergency assistance. The emergency assistance must be for, or directly related to the participant, not the participant's family members. Examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rent (emergency) <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Repair <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Need <input type="checkbox"/> House Repair <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care (e.g. training for the participant) <p>NOTE: Offer a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, if possible. Child care benefits should be coordinated to ensure correct payment.</p> <p>NOTE: Unemployment compensation is separate and countable income.</p>	Excluded	No
<p>Flexible Benefits – Employee Option: Flexible benefits, which are voluntarily withheld for a paycheck, are countable wages. The employee exercises the option of contributing to a flex plan or taking the wages in cash.</p>	Employment	Yes
<p>Food Stamp Benefits: The CCDF requires states to report Food Stamp participation on the ACF-801. Record the amount of the food stamp allotment. The amount is not counted as income for eligibility purposes.</p> <p>⇒ Verify Food Stamp Benefits on the TEAMS TAFS/TAF3 screen 'AMT' column.</p>	Food Stamps	No
<p>Foster Care Income and Supportive Services: Payments that are specified in the appropriate foster care plan. TEAMS income code 'FC CI' (child in) or 'FC CO' (child out)</p>	Excluded	No

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Garnishment: A garnishment is not subtracted from the individual's gross income. Use the income code that corresponds to the source of the garnished income. EXAMPLE: Garnishment amounts from unemployment benefits are coded "Unemployment Compensation." EXAMPLE: A child support garnishment of a paycheck is coded "Employment" income.	?	Yes
GI Bill (or Veterans' Administration Education Payments) . . . are excluded, provided the participant is attending an institution of higher education/training.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Gifts - \$50/Individual or Less: Small cash gifts, up to \$50 per gift per individual, may be excluded. A gift presented to the entire assistance unit is considered as equally divided among the members.	Excluded	No
Gifts - Over \$50/Individual: Large Gifts over \$50 per individual shall be considered contributions.	Other Income	Yes
Government Pension:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Housing Voucher or Cash: CCDF requires states to report housing subsidy participation on the ACF-801. The amount is not included as income for eligibility purposes. (Do not enter student housing.) NOTE: It is not necessary to verify the client's statement regarding housing participation. NOTE: While Montana does not count housing benefits when determining eligibility, the federal ACF-801 report asks about housing participation. If the family receives housing benefits, enter one dollar (\$1) in CCUBS as 'Housing' to identify the family's participation. This will cause the ACF-801 to report this benefit in a Yes/No format, while not counting the income for eligibility purposes.	Housing Voucher	No (\$1)
HUD Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Escrow Account Interest:	Excluded	No
Incentive Payments . . . designed to encourage participation in Public Assistance Programs:	Excluded	No
Indian (Native American) Countable Income: Countable income includes, but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) income <input type="checkbox"/> Farm and grazing lease income <input type="checkbox"/> Interest income <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral rights income <input type="checkbox"/> Oil and gas royalties income <input type="checkbox"/> Transfers of countable monies from other Indian agencies 	Other Income	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Indian (Native American) Excluded Income: Exclude the following income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Income derived from sub marginal lands <input type="checkbox"/> Interest earned on excluded funds <input type="checkbox"/> Judgment claim income <input type="checkbox"/> Per capita payment income, from funds held in trust distributed to enrolled members (a.k.a. BIA check) <input type="checkbox"/> Up to \$2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians which are derived from leases or other uses of individually-owned trust or restricted lands 	Excluded	No
In-Kind Income – Earned or Obligated for Housing or Food: The value of earned, or obligated, in-kind income is the current value of the service provided. An earned, or obligated, third party vendor payment is counted as in-kind income if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The value of the payment <u>is earned and contributes housing or food to the employee</u>, or; <input type="checkbox"/> The value of the payment <u>is legally obligated</u> to the family. And; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A third party pays a vendor, benefiting the family <input type="checkbox"/> Cash is not available to the family This does not include employer paid benefits unrelated to housing or food, such as health insurance premiums or child care benefits. EXAMPLE: An individual receives housing in exchange for general maintenance services. The earned in-kind earnings are valued at the amount of the rent. EXAMPLE: An employer pays the rent as an employment benefit. The value of the rent is countable in-kind income. EXAMPLE: Money legally obligated to the household, but diverted to a third party to pay a household expense.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
In-Kind Income - Unearned: A third party payment made as gift to the family may be excluded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The value of the payment is not legally obligated to the family, or; <input type="checkbox"/> The benefit is not tied to the employee's earnings, such as the value of uniforms, group health insurance, or child care benefits available to all persons employed. And; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A third party pays a vendor, benefiting the family <input type="checkbox"/> Cash is not available to the family. EXAMPLE: The participant's father pays \$100 of the participant's rent directly to the proprietor.	Excluded	No
Insurance Settlement: Proceeds of Fire or Casualty Ins. Claim used to recoup for the loss or casualty within three months of receipt. The insurance money must be signed over to the person or company who will do the repairs or otherwise disposed of within this period.	Excluded	No
Interest, Dividend or Royalty Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Irregular or Infrequent Income:	Other Income	Yes
Jury Duty: The income received, less per diem allowance, is counted. EXCEPTION: If the individual provides verification that the payment was given to his/her employer, "Exclude" the income.	Employment	Yes
Lease Income:	Rental or Lease Income	Yes
Life Insurance – Annuity Income, or Payments Over Time: Cash received, and available earnings, from an annuity are countable. NOTE: Dividends and interest available to individuals are also countable, even though these earning may be reinvested. NOTE: See Life Insurance – Lump Sum Payment	Other Income	Yes
Life Insurance – Lump Sum Payment: If prospected, a life insurance payment is countable in the month received. NOTE: See Life Insurance – Annuity Income, or Regular Payments	Lump Sum	Yes
Loans: A valid loan is a loan for which the lender must deliver a sum of money to a borrower. The borrower must express or imply, either orally or in writing, an obligation to repay. The obligation to repay must be absolute and not contingent on the occurrence of an uncertain event. EXCEPTION: Educational loans are identified as "Educational Grant or Loan Assistance."	Excluded	No
Low Income Energy Assistance Payment (LIEAP) Income:	Excluded	No
Lump Sum Payment: Non-recurring lump sum payments are counted. The income must be prospected when determining eligibility. Examples include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Capital gains <input type="checkbox"/> Crop insurance proceeds <input type="checkbox"/> Rebate or credit refunds <input type="checkbox"/> Settlements from Social Security, TANF Cash, Tribal TANF, railroad retirement or insurance claims <input type="checkbox"/> Severance pay or sick leave payout 	Lump Sum	Yes
Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980:	Excluded	No
Military Allotment: A military allotment is not subtracted from the service member's gross income. An allotment is used to send money back to the family or pay a third party. EXAMPLE: Child support might be paid through a military allotment.	Employment	Yes
Military Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH): A stipend paid to military personnel, whether cash or payments in-kind. Employer paid housing and food benefits are countable.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Military Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS): A stipend paid to military personnel, whether cash or payments in-kind. Employer paid housing and food benefits are countable.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
Non-Cash Employee Compensation - Food or Shelter: Earned employee compensation benefit, which is either food or shelter, counts as earned in-kind income.	In-Kind (Earned/ Obligated)	Yes
Non-Cash Employee Compensation – Other than Food or Shelter: Employer compensation benefits that are not available in the form of cash, food or shelter, are not included as income. If the employee may take any of these benefits as cash, the benefits are countable. The following examples may not be countable income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Child care benefits paid by the employer <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible spending benefits paid by the employer <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance premiums (medical, life, disability) paid by the employer <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicles, used for employment purposes. 	Excluded	No
Nutrition Program for the Elderly: Any benefits received under Title VII, Nutrition Program for the Elderly, of the Older Americans Act of 1965 are not counted.	Excluded	No
Pension Annuity Payments:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Personal Injury Settlement Payments: This income is evaluated as a possible lump-sum payment. If the income does not meet lump sum policy, only the amount actually released and received by the participant is counted as “Disability Benefits.”	Lump Sum	Yes
Radiation Exposure Compensation Income:	Excluded	No
Railroad Retirement:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Refugee's Sponsor's Income:	Excluded	No
Reimbursements:	Excluded	No
Relocation Payments: Payments, received under Title II of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, are not counted.	Excluded	No
Rental Income:	Rental or Lease Income	Yes
Retirement Income:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Royalty, Dividends or Interest Income: Personal interest, dividend, and royalty income are countable.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Salary, Wages or Commissions:	Employment	Yes
Sale of Blood: Income from the sale of whole blood or blood plasma is considered self-employment income.	Self-Employment	Yes
Scholarship: See educational income.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Section 8/HUD Utilities Payments . . . regardless of the payee.	Excluded	No
Self-Employment Income:	Self-Employment	Yes
Severance Pay: Severance pay represents a non-recurring compensation outside of regular earnings. It is treated as lump sum earned income.	Lump Sum	Yes
Shelter Workshop/Rehabilitation Center Income: Handicapped individuals often work in sheltered workshops or rehabilitation centers performing services/work for therapeutic or rehabilitative purposes. These earnings are totally excluded. Although their wages are subject to taxes, etc., IRS rules treat them as non-employees. (Revenue ruling 65-165.)	Excluded	No
Social Security Benefits (SS): Social Security benefits are paid to an individual, to the family of an individual, based on the individual's earnings. They may be in the form of retirement benefits or survivor's benefits.	Other Federal Cash Income Program	Yes
Social Security Disability Income (SSDI): SSDI benefits are paid to a disabled individual or a disabled individual's family. The payments are based on the disabled individual's past earnings.	Other Federal Cash Income Programs	Yes
Striker Income: Income from union strike activity is countable income.	Other Income	Yes
Student Housing: Student housing is not considered Federal Housing Voucher or Cash' assistance for federal reporting purposes. NOTE: By policy, all income is entered, whether countable in determining eligibility. However, there is no need to enter student-housing benefits as income in CCUBS.	N/A	No
Supplemental Food Assistance . . . received under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the National School Lunch Act.	Excluded	No

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Eligibility workers may use the following guidance to identify supplemental security income: SSI payments are made to individuals unable to earn income due to a disability or other qualifying cause. SSI benefits are not based on past earnings and are limited in amount. ⇒ Verify the client's statement regarding SSI Stamp participation, since this may be confused with SS or SSDI. EXCEPTION: If the SSI recipient clearly uses the monetary resource to provide income to another household member, then the other household member would include the respective contribution (Other Income).	Supplemental Security Income	No
Supportive Services . . . which are specified in a public assistance program.	Excluded	No
TANF Cash Benefits: Enter the TANF Cash benefit for each individual. NOTE: While Montana counts TANF Cash benefits when determining eligibility, the only Non-TANF families receiving 'Child Only' TANF Cash grants are affected by the amount of TANF income entered in CCUBS. Additionally, the federal ACF-801 report asks if TANF Cash is a source of income to the family. ⇒ Verify TANF Cash Benefits on the CCUBS 'TEAMS Person Information' interface and/or on the TEAMS TAFS/TAF2 screens 'AMT' column.	TANF Cash Assistance	Yes
TANF Cash Recoupment Amount (Fraud): Do not reduce TANF Cash benefits by any recoupment amount.	Excluded	No
TANF Cash Supplement – FS Countable:	Excluded	No
TANF Cash Underpayment – Exempt:	Excluded	No
Tips: Tips coincide with employment hours. NOTE: If an individual works only for tips, they are self-employed.	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Training Allowance – Not a Reimbursement: EXAMPLE: An employer pays a training stipend, as set amount. This may occur before employment or during employment.	Tips or Bonuses	Yes
Training Related Reimbursement: EXAMPLE: An employer pays for a current employee's for training expenses.	Excluded	No
Tribal TANF:	Tribal TANF	Yes
Trust Fund Income: Cash <u>received</u> , and <u>available earnings</u> , from a trust fund are countable. Dividends and interest available to individuals are countable, even though these earning may be reinvested.	Interest, Dividend, Royalty	Yes

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
Unemployment Insurance Compensation: <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Insurance (UI) [State – 26 weeks] <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) [Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance - 26 weeks] <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Federal TRA. [Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance - 26 weeks]	Unemployment Compensation	Yes
Vendor Payment - Earned or Obligated: See In-Kind Income – Earned or Obligated.	Employment	Yes
Vendor Payment - Unearned: See In-Kind Income – Unearned	Excluded	No
Veterans' Administration Education Payments (or GI Bill) . . . are excluded, provided the participant is attending an institution of higher education/training.	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No
Veterans' Pensions and Benefits:	Pension or Retirement	Yes
Victims Compensation Program: Payments to victims of crime for medical/therapy costs incurred as the result of criminal acts, paid after all other insurance, etc. fulfills their obligations.	Excluded	No
Vietnam Veterans, Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans See “Disabled Children of Female Vietnam Veterans”	Excluded	No
VISTA Income:	Employment	Yes
Vocational Rehabilitation Income:	Excluded	No
Wages, Salary or Commission:	Employment	Yes
Weatherization: One-time payments for weatherization and replacement or repair of heating or cooling devices are excluded.	Excluded	No
Women, Infant's & Children (WIC):	Excluded	No
Workers' Compensation Benefits:	Worker Compensation	Yes
Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Educational Income: If the parent does not need the WIA hours to meet the minimum hourly work requirement, the income may be coded as “Educational Grant or Loan Assistance.” Also, see “Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Work.”	Educational Grant or Loan Assistance	No

Attachment H - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Income Table for Non-TANF Child Care Scholarships	Income Type	Count
<p>Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Work: When the participant needs work hours to meet the minimum hourly work requirement, code WIA income as "Employment." On-the-job training may be long term (6+ months) or short term WIA/WEX training. Participants receive a paycheck from their employer, or from a WoRC contractor. There may be no indication the employee is a WIA participant. WIA replaces the JTPA program.</p> <p>Also, see "Workforce Investment Act (WIA) as Educational Income."</p>	Employment	Yes

Montana's Early Learning Guidelines

2004



What children ages three to five need to know, understand, and be able to do

Attachment I - MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007

Montana's Early Learning Guidelines are finalized and published. The document is available, both in Acrobat Reader 'PDF' format and in Microsoft Word format, on the Montana Early Childhood Project web page:

<http://www.montana.edu/ecp/pubs.html>

**MONTANA'S EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES
Assessments, Timelines and Anticipated Outcomes**

One Train the Trainers session was held shortly following the initial printing of the Montana Early Learning Guidelines (ELG's). Training representatives attended this presentation from all twelve Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

The MT Early Childhood Services Bureau has presented 5 sessions to date regarding the use of the MT ELG's with an approximate 100 early care and education professionals having participated.

Head Start outreach began in December 2004. A "cross-walking" template has been developed, in collaboration with the MT Head Start Collaboration office; to align the MT ELG's with the Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Child Outcomes, the Head Start PRISM program review instrument, as well as the MT Early Care and Education Knowledge Base, and MT K-12 content standards. This information was disseminated at the National Head Start Collaboration Director's meeting and was shared with ACF in February 2005. A full "cross-walking" instrument is projected to be complete and printed by September 2005.

A tool kit and trainer's manual is being developed with the initial document projected to be complete by September 2005. This document will be updated as new training and education methods are developed for the MT ELG's.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency trainers will receive and update "train the trainers" session at their annual trainers meeting. Ideas and methods of implementing the MT ELG's will be shared and added to the trainer's MT ELG tool kit/implementation kit.

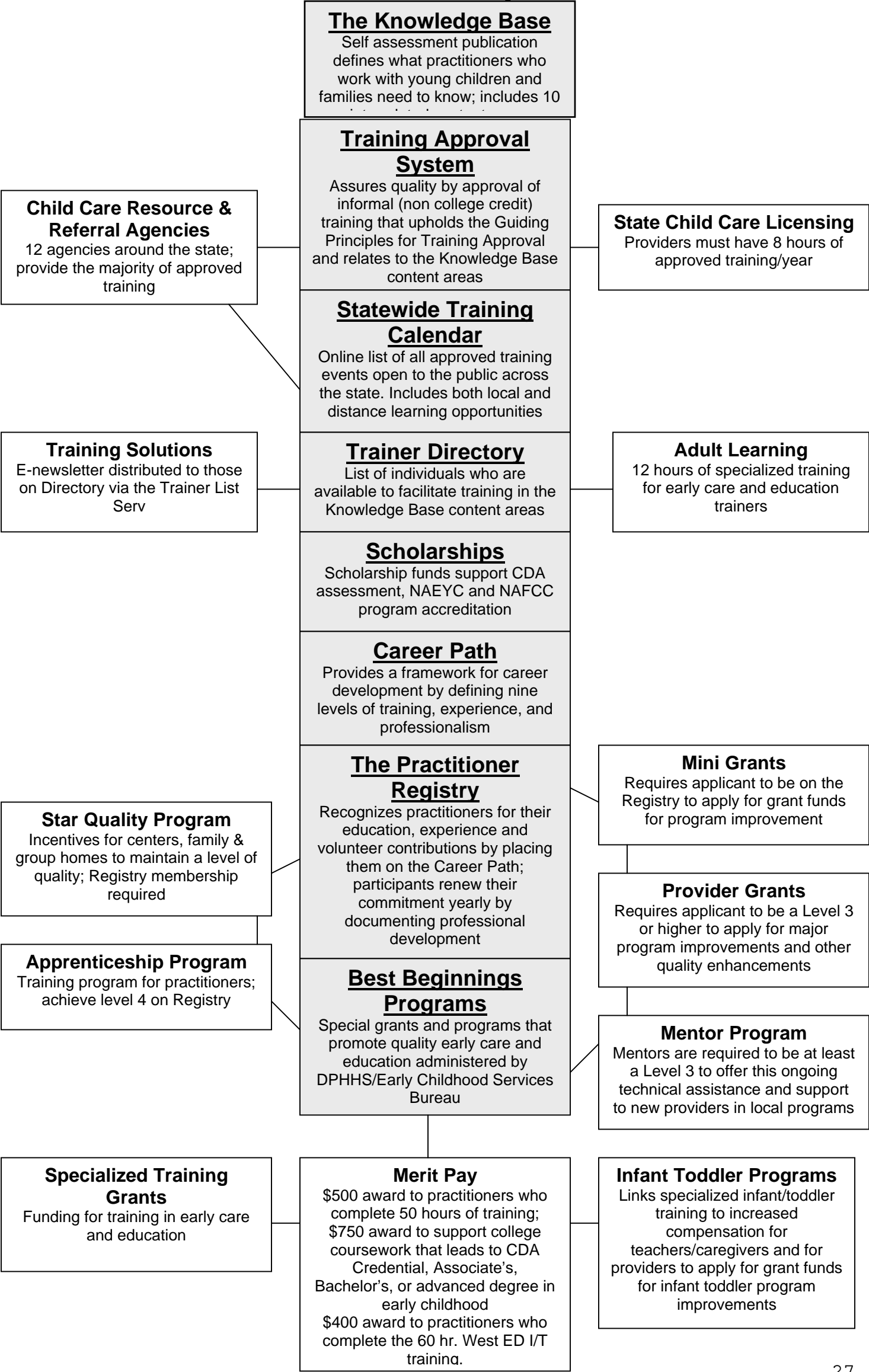
An initial meeting is planned for May 2005 to meet with public school officials regarding the MT ELG's and their use with Kindergarten and elementary education teachers. Meetings and presentations will then be scheduled to ensure there are copies in all MT public elementary schools with teachers and administrators understanding how they will support their work with young children.

A family/parent MT ELG companion document is being developed with a projected first draft completed by October 2005. This document will be reviewed by parents and early childhood professionals, with an anticipated initial print date of January 2006.

Outreach to public and private agencies and interested parties will continue through 2006 – 2007 with updates as identified.

Attachment K- MONTANA CCDF State Plan for FFY 2006-2007
Professional Development Plan

Montana Early Care and Education Career Development



HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Health and Safety issues should be considered when arranging for child care. Here are some topics a parent and child care provider may want to discuss. For more information regarding quality child care, contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency.

No corporal punishment may be inflicted.

- _____ Is parental access unlimited?
- _____ Is the provider in good health?
- _____ Is the provider trained about basic health, safety issues?
- _____ Is the provider trained about child development issues?
- _____ Does the provider wash hands thoroughly, before and after diapering?
- _____ Does the provider wash hands thoroughly, before preparing food?
- _____ Has the provider received guidelines on how to "child-proof" the home?
- _____ Does the provider talk easily with the children and respond to their needs?
- _____ Does the emotional climate foster happiness and trust?
- _____ Does the provider offer learning opportunities to the children?
- _____ Are children's immunizations current?
- _____ Are emergency telephone numbers and parent telephone numbers posted?
- _____ Is the provider trained in First Aid and CPR?
- _____ Does the provider have an emergency medical authorization form signed by the parent?
- _____ Is a first aid kit available?
- _____ Are meals and snacks nutritious?
- _____ Is there a quiet comfortable place for naps?
- _____ Is the play equipment safe?
- _____ Is the home clean?
- _____ Are the children exposed to smoking?
- _____ Are hazards inaccessible to children, inside and out?
- _____ Are electrical outlets covered?
- _____ Are heaters ventilated and screened?
- _____ Are poisonous substances out of reach of children?
- _____ Are smoke detectors in place and operational?
- _____ Is a fire extinguisher available?
- _____ Are firearms locked and inaccessible?
- _____ Are appropriate automobile restraints, such as car seats, used?